O T I L L E, T H E O C T O R O O N E.

Tragedy in

F i v e A c t s.

By

S A R A B. G R O E N E V E L T.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N A E .

ALCIDE DE VIAVANT,--------young Creole lawyer of lofty lineage.

DON OLIVIERA,----------A Spanish noble.

WEYBURN,----------planter and ex-overseer.

DR. GREGORIO,----------Surgeon of Charity Hospital and friend of De Viavant.

JÉSU CHRISTI MONTIBELLO,--Italian fruit vendor.

SNOWDRIFT,----------black boy, son of Angelique.

OTILLE,----------daughter of Don Oliviera.

DONNA OLIVIERA,----------step-mother to Otille.

ANGELIQUE (Angele),--------negress and nurse to Otille, Americanized Creole.

LUELLA DEANE, Accomplished and: intriguing woman: Courtesans and Mistresses of Weyburn.

INEZ, wife of Montibello :

DETECTIVE HENNESSEY.

PLANTATION NEGRO MINSTRELS.

Plantation-Negroes, Italians, Hospital students, etc.

CHARACTER PROPERTIES.

EDITH DE VIAMONT,----------young Comte's lawyer of forty
                                 lineage.
DE VILLERS,----------A Spanish noble.

MONTOUR,----------pioneer and ex-coureur.

C. SIGNORIA,----------Governor of Quebec (English) and
                                 Baron of De Tierant.
LADY SIMONET MONTMORIN,--Italian Prelate's widow.

SHUTTERLY,----------Clerk for, man of Montmorin.

CECILIA,----------daughter of Don Diaviano.

DONNA MARIANNA,----------duty-bound to Cecilia.

ANTONIO (Angelo),----------governess and nurse to Cecilia.
                                 Saint Lawrence Circuit.
LUCRIA LAMBE, Accomplished but:
                                 intriguing woman; Contrasting and vis-
                                 ;   ionary of Canada.
TONE, wife of Montmorin ;

MONTMORIN'S SECRETARY.

FLAGELLATION SOUND ATTENDANTS.

Flagellation-Tongues, Italians, Spanish wrangle, etc.

O T I L L E, T H E O C T O R O O N E.

A C T I.

(Plantation Negro Minstrels. Negro songs and dances with banjo accompaniment. Exuent.)

SCENE I:

(Scene I. De Viavant Sugar Plantation, then above New Orleans, where Marine Hospital now stands.
Summer house amid the shrubbery. House, plantation, etc. in the distance.)
(At rise of curtain, ANGÈLE discovered singing Glory Hallelujah and sweeping the walks near summer house, then leaning on her broom.)

Angele.

At last, I'm back where I fust seen de light,
It must be thirty year sence I was born.
My youngest gal was twenty odd last spring.
(Singing and sweeping)
Dem lazy little darkeys leaves dere work
For us old folks. Dey don't make niggers like
Dey used to. Lost de pattern I suppose.
(Singing and sweeping. Exit. Enter WEYBURN and LUELLA.)

Weyburn.

What in the devil are you doing here?
I thought you understood that we were quits.

Luella.

I heard something I thought I ought to tell
You. They say: long ago a Spanish Don
Left his plantation up in Acady,
And went to New Orleans to buy a lot
Of darkies at the old Arcade Exchange.
He bought Angèle, a nigger wench. And then
A pretty Octoroone named Natalie
Was auctioned off. The Don bid high for her,
Got her and took her home, and had her taught
By splendid teachers, and then after she
Gave him a baby girl, he married her.

O T I E S, T H E G O S S O O N E R.

A C T I.

(Illumination fancy lantern. Lucrece enters and leaves with large armchair. Thomas.)

CUTIE I:

(Scene I. The Wizard Super Plumbing, then enters the Delphine, Sally Xmas has gifted her stocks.
Sewer Jones and the governess, Lucrece, Elizabeth, Vera, in the dining-room.)
(At rise of curtain, Lucrece discovered alone on Queen Delphine and connecting the cable over arrow house, and leaving on her crown.)

Lucrece.

Do least, I'm dead where I first made on Sally.
It must be lovely when never I was young.
Of romance and was lovely and lazy spring.
(Knocking and knocking)
Two lazy little monkeys Jeanne dare work
Her in old folks. They don't make slippers like
My dear to. Look on pretent I suppose.
(Knocking and screaming. Enter Delphine Marjorie and Lucrece.)

Marjorie.

Most in the devil are pig going home
I thought you wanted had her work quite.

Lucrece.

I heard something I thought I ought to call
You. Why say: Lord and a Spanish Don
Left his plantation up in Jamaica
And went to see Orlando to buy a cat
Of Darkie at the old Jewish Exchange.
Hr bought Angela, a nigger wench. And then
A pretty Delphine came Natally
Was captured off. The Don had kept her away,
Got her and took her home, and had her taught
By Spanish teachers, and then after she
Gave him a baby girl, he married her.

But he soon tired of her, gave her a lot
Of money to give up their child to him,
Then unbeknown to anyone, somehow
He got their marriage record in his hands,
And no one never seen it to this day,
And then he went off with his child and left
His nigger wife who died soon afterwards.

Weyburn.

What are you driving at? What do you take
Me for? Am I one of those Bible chaps
That you should talk to me in Parables?

Luella.

Be quiet, please, and listen till the end.
He married some big bug the second time.
His child grew awful handsome, so they said,
And no one but her father and her old
Nigger nurse knew about her nigger blood.
But the Don lost his riches and his fine
Girl had to marry money, and she took
An overseer, and that was you, and your
Grand wife's a nigger, so we're even now.
That wee vein on her cheek shows nigger blood.

Weyburn.

(Lifting his arm menacingly) You are a liar.

Luella.

Touch me if you dare,
And I will tell your people who I am.
You might have married me, I'm white at least.

Weyburn.

(Aside) If there be truth in what that wench has said
I'll make it hot for that cursed wife of mine.
(Aloud) If you have lied to me--you'll pay for this.
(Pushing her from him and rushing out.
Luella exits. Enter OTILLE and ALCIDE.)

SCENE II.

Otille.

Were you mated, and had you learned too late
That inky blood had left upon your wife,
Your cherished wife, its stain indelible,
Would you not spurn her from you, though she were
Unconscious of the ignominious taint.

Alcide.

I should be misérable, certainment,
Cela va sans dire. Although a man may have
A penchant for a beautiful quadroone
He will nevertheless abhor a blot
On his posterity. Why do you ask?
Ma foi! ce serait terrible--still I'd feel
A boundless pity pour la malheureuse.
It is a wise father who knows his own
Son. So alas! the most punctilious might
Have such a fate -- but oh! what contumely
For one who boasts a crested ancestry.
I shudder at the thought, yet, woman, woman,
Thy very helplessness is thy tower of strength.
Thy strongest appeal to man's nobler nature.

Otille.

(Excitedly) And pray what braggart boasts a higher rank
Than Nature's nobleman?

Alcide.

What ails thee, child?

Otille.

Not truer is the needle to the pole
Than thou to truth and honor--but may God
Preserve you ever from so cruel a fate.

Alcide.

What troubles you? dites moi, ma pauvre petite?
Let these broad shoulders bear your burden chère
And we'll outwit fair-faced, false-hearted Fate,
Whose barbed arrows ever lie in wait.

(ANGÈLE enters, resumes her sweeping and again she softly sings "Glory Hallelujah" then suddenly stops, puts her broom noiselessly aside and listens, as she glances towards the Summer House.)

Je t'aime cherie. I had not meant to tell
You, but what's said cannot be unsaid. For

Your sake, love, I am going far from here.
Dost thou not know, pauvre innocente, that love
Like ours, unsanctioned by the altar, leads
But to perdition? I've not passed unscathed
The fiery furnace of temptation, yet
I cannot let my little snow-drop wilt
In the blinding heat of unholy love,
Whose blandishments are a decoy, whose joys
Are a chimera. Passion beckons us
With dreamy eyes, and sensuous lips aboard
Her gilded barge. Trust not the leaky craft,
Tossed rudderless upon Life's turbid stream,
It carries desolation in its wake,
As with its reckless crew, it drifts down, down
Into the damning whirlpool of despair.
Could I, who'd barter Heaven itself for you,
Scorch my pure lily with the flames of Hell?
Not if she were a willing sacrifice--
But I am only human--and ere long
It may be too late. Now, I'm strong enough
To leave you to honor and misery. Far
Better that--than dishonor and misery.
It is misery, misery, whichever way
We turn. God pity such as we. O would
To Heaven, Mignonne, that I had held my peace.

Otille.

O call it pity--friendship--'tis not love.

Alcide.
(Stooping to kiss her good bye)

But hélas! "Pity is akin to love--
And friendship next door neighbor," innocente.

Otille.
(Repelling him)

Is this the way you practice what you preach?
Is this the way you save me from the flames
Of Hell? My husband's curses could not scorch
Me like one kiss from him who is not mine.

Alcide.
(Pleading excitedly)

One kiss Otille, one only as a pledge
Of our undying love, one innocent
Kiss, ere we part forever--only one--
Give me your lips--I'm mad--one kiss Otille--

Your smile, Lord, I do polish you from here,
Have done not love, Deserve Innocence, that Love
Idle-mere, unconditional by the dialer, hands
Not to possibility. It's not remind to Nobodies
Non-Alone Forever or computers, yet
I cannot let my lips a cross-body site
In the lighting moat of solitude-time.
Alone is metaphysical are a demon, alone love
Are a cylinder. Tension presses us
With dreary eyes, are summoned life's sound
Her cylical bridge. Tears not the lover cycle,
Tears nudgeline upon life's mental stream,
It reaches revolution to life value.
Not to the lies reality more. It digital dust, deer,
Then the lunatic wilderness or dynamic.
Could I, who's lunar lovers lunatic my,
Gaunch my poor life with the stream of life?
Not it mirrors a wilding moonlight--
But I am cold lunar--you and lunar
It may be the lunar. Now, it's strong moonlit
To leave you to lunar and stormy. Not
Lovers one--that distance and history.
It knowing, history, dynamic--
The turns. You pity such or me. O could
To dance, Microcosm, that I had lost my poem.

Hello.

O cold it pity--Tranquility--'its not love.

Ashley.

(Concentrate to take her own life)
Not that! Trying to exist to Sky--
And tranquility more soon mathematics, Lorenzo!

Odilio.

(Pensively)
Is this the way you speak to your prisoner?
Is this the way you save me from the Tyrant
Or Hugo? The Duchess's garden would not shower
Me like one star Fairy-Lain the in my mind.

Ashley.

(Hesitating and tired)
One kiss Odilio, one kiss in a pledge
Of our undying love, our journey
Home, even particle--we'll be--
Have the love life--life and--we kiss life--

Otille.

Back, back! I am a married woman, Sir!
No stain shall mar the white robes of my honor.
No--no--I am a hapless wife, but none
Shall dare to say, I am a faithless one!
(Exits. Alcide stands a moment stunned and speechless, then looks at his watch.)

Alcide.

Madman! Through folly, I may miss the boat.
(Exits. Angele resumes her sweeping and singing.)

Angele.

I'm moughty sorry for dem chillen, Sah.
(Exits)
(OTILLE enters, throws herself on a luxurious couch, wrings her hands and weeps bitterly.)

Otille.

Alcide--my love, my love! God pity me!
Alas! the sun has gone out of my life,
And left me in the darkness of despair.
(She falls into a stupor, till roused by a gruff voice. Enter WEYBURN, drunk.)

Weyburn.

Hello! what in the devil ails you now?
Well, I swear there ain't such another piece
Of affectation in all niggerdom.
You can't come your Dehoney airs on me,
Come, come, get up you lazy hussy, I
Am well acquainted with your race. I know
Their little idiosyncrasies. I've
Not been a negro driver all these years
For nothin , and this good old cognac brings
The old plantation, and the old ways back
Again. Here wench, bring me my riding whip.
(Otille hands him his whip.)
Come hustle round. (Cracks his whip at her)
Fetch me another flask
Of Brandy. Here's a bumper to your health
Ma jolie femme de couleur.

Otille.

Are you mad?

Weyburn.

They say, that you look like that Natalie
Your father bought at the Arcade Exchange.

Otille.

(Clutches his arm appealingly)

Can there be any truth in what I heard
That snake-eyed woman hiss into your ear?

Weyburn.

She is not snake-eyed; she is beautiful!
You women undervalue rival charms;
You mean my former mistress. Ha! you wince,
You thought you were the first upon the throne
Of my affections. Well, she's white, at least!

(Enter ANGÈLE, who has been listening.)

Angèle.

Dat ooman ain't white.

Weyburn.

Who says that?

Angèle.

I does.
She's black-hearted, and dey tells me de blood
Flow from de heart, den ain't she black, ob course
She is. Who sez my gal ain't white? Her ma
Was white as snow, and lubly as a pink.

Otille.

That woman has no real proof. Her proofs
Are but the offspring of her lying tongue.

(Weyburn points to a dusky, almost imperceptible vein on Otille's cheek near her rounded chin.)

Weyburn.

Look, look! Her proof is here! here! He who runs
May read, and he who reads may run, may run.
Look at that little dark vein on your cheek,
Look where the nigger blood has left its trail.
The snail can't hide its slime. The proof is here.

(Slams door and exits. Otille picks up a small mirror and looks critically at herself.)

Pauline.

Tony sez, that you look like Mad Maudie.
Your father bought it in Korea, Shanghai.

Philip.

(Pulling you aside.)

Can there be any truth to this I hear?
That Cuckoo-Lane woman lies upon your day?

Pauline.

She is not Cuckoo-Lane; she is Theosophist!
Her mental capabilities exist elsewhere;
You mean to [illegible]. Oh! you flirt.
You thought you were in Tyler upon Cuckoo-Lane
Of an affiliation. Well, she's alive. So have I!

(Philip Pauline, who has been lip-reading.)

Philip.

Isn't mental life's [illegible].

Pauline.

The very [illegible]!

Philip.

I does.
Ain's black-hearted, see? Ain't [illegible] me no blood
Flow from do heart. Don ain't she black, oh [illegible]
Ma ie. "Do was to get [illegible]? Ber ma
Ma [illegible] as [illegible], ma [illegible] a [illegible].

Philip.

That woman has no [illegible]. She [illegible]
Am not the [illegible] of her [illegible].

(Pauline [illegible] in a [illegible], [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] with [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible].)

Pauline.

Look, Lord! Her proof is here! Never! Do who [illegible]
[illegible], and to the [illegible] [illegible], [illegible].
Look at that little [illegible] with [illegible],
Look where the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].
The small [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. The [illegible] [illegible].
(Pauline [illegible] [illegible]. Philip [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible].)

Otille.

Angèle, what means this little dark, dark vein?

Angèle.

I don't see nothin' but de roses, God
Almighty planted on your posty cheek.

Otille.

Look close, and see the viper coiled beneath--
An Octoroone--Is this my noble birth?
Great God who gave me life, is this Thy gift?

SCENE III. Same.

(Enter WEYBURN.)

Weyburn.

I want my supper. I am hungry. Give
It to me here! this minute, or I'll go
Where I can get it. I'm not going to wait.
(Seats himself at the table and rings for the servants. Enter SERVANTS.)
Bring me my supper quick--step lively nigs--
(The servants rushing here and there, put the supper on poll-mell. He whistles for his dog. Bijou, the dog, enters.)
Here Bijou, here Bijou, sit up, sit up.
(The dog sits up)
Give me your paw, my beauty; shake hands. How
Has doggy been to-day. (Carosses the smiling brute)
Kiss me old girl. (Dog licks his face.)
Come Bijou, take your tid-bits, while I eat.
(Chooses the daintiest morsels from his plate for his blooded pointer.)

Otille.

How much dearer to men's heart is his dog
Than his wife. His dog can find his heart-strings.

Weyburn.

His wife can find his purse-strings, ha! and they
Alone can tell how dear she is to him.
(She sits at table, Weyburn jumps up)
Why Buzzard! that dog has a pedigree.
If you are going to sit at table, I
Shall stand, for I don't eat with niggers--not
If I know it and know myself--by gad!
Now that you niggers have no market price,
These registered dogs are undoubtedly

OSWALD.

Regina, may I speak with Jacob alone, one moment?

REGINA.

I don't know why he should, now
Alving's placed us under obligations.

OSWALD.

Good Alving, and his very right hand in everything--
do believe--I'm sure you agree with me--
always has been quite an angel, in fact, to mother.

MADAME ALV. Yes, indeed.

(Enter JACOB.)

JACOB.

I want my supper. I can't stay long. Give
it to me now! Have it ready, for I'll go
where I can get it. I'm not going to wait.

(Regina hurries to the table and brings back a tray
for the supper. Jacob sits down and begins--)

Bring me my supper quickly--step lively, girl--
(Regina arranges the tray on the table before him.)
the supper on well-mixed. He delays for
him long. Listen, can you, mother,
have Alving, home Friday, why, up, all right.

(Regina goes out.)

Here we have peace, and quietness. Such a thing
had always been so-near. (Impatiently the knocking heard.)
Kitty is all right. (Enter Jacob his food.)
Some slices, take your time-I'm, waiting I not.

(Regina is distributed something from his
plate into his knapsack and bottle.)

OSWALD.

That much drawing to get a bite of food
that's all. His son can tell his heart-aching.

MADAME.

His wife can find his pleasure-seeking, but
Alving can tell how dear she is to him.

(She sits at table. Oswald sings and
Madame. That dog has a pedigree.
If you are going to eat at table, I
shall stand. For I don't get with niggers--not
If I know it. Jacob knew myself--by God!
Your dogs are niggers have no market price.
These pugilistic dogs are unmanageable.

Your superiors. Take a look at that
Genealogical tree--Idiot!
(Draws from his pocket a little book, ornamented with filagree work and throws it at her.)
And then perhaps, you'll not compare yourself
To a pure-blooded quadruped again.

Otille.
(Approaches Weyburn and speaks softly)
The servants will hear you. For God's sake hush!

Weyburn.
(Rises and with arm uplifted shrieks)
A cursed, measly nigger for a wife--
The rabble in the streets would hoot at me
If they but knew. A nigger wife---by gad!
Go! you black devil! get out of my sight!
Or I will crush you with my heel, as I
Would any other loathsome viper--Go!
You carrion--crow--flit--sweep out--spread your wings!
Move on--Migrate to San Domingo, where
The blackest niggers are the bon ton. Fly!
(Dashes the contents of his third wine glass in her face. He falls on the couch in a drunken stupor.)

Otille.
(Bitterly)
Great God! an Octoroore, an Octoroone!
And chained forever to a drunken brute.
Fair hope is dead--My heart's her sepulchre.
(Laying her hand on her heart goes to window)
The night jessamine is sighing o'er her tomb,
I'm friendless, friendless, even sleep deserts
The Octoroone. What graveyard stillness reigns,
I almost hear the quick, tumultuous blood
That's running riot in my surging veins.
Nought breaks the silence, save that old time-piece;
(Lifts curtain, revealing old fashioned clock)
There's something almost human in that great
Clock's tantalizing, measured, mocking tones,
That tell each madding moment o'er and o'er
As it ticks my allotted minutes out
To me. Here, (Holds up a vial to the clock)

Miser, keep them all yourself,
Since you make so much noise about your part
I'd rather die than share my hours with you.
Your rhythmic heart-beats jar against the wild,
Impetuous throbbing of my own. They grate
Their discords on my unstrung nerves and rouse
My fevered brain to frenzy. Am I mad?
That clock's a ghoul--see how he stares at me--
And now he lifts his bony hands. He speaks--
(The clock strikes twelve)
He hears him say--"I know you Octoroone,
Thrice ere life's taper has expired these hands
Shall toll the bell--that sounds your funeral knell."
What does he mean? How can I die before
Life's taper has expired? Let time explain
His own conundrums--tick, tick. Am I mad?
What does he mean? Am I to die ere three
O'clock and shall I be entombed alive?
And is that voice prophetic of my fate?
Tick, tick, tick, tick, hush! hush! tick, tick, hush!
hush!
Tick, tick--I'll strangle you if you don't hush!
Stop murderer--stop ticking my life away;
Are you Almighty God, that you should dole
Out my unhappy life in pitiless,
Pitiful moments, one by one to me?
Tick, tick, tick, tick, hush! hush, tick, tick, Oh! oh!
That clock, that clock, I'm going mad, mad, mad!
(Puts her hands to her ears and rushes away from the clock. Walks towards window.)

ACT I, SCENE IV, Same.

(Otille at window, draped with vines.)

Otille.

Beyond the tented clouds, the starry hosts
Are bivouacking on the plains of Heaven,
All nature sleeps, but there's no rest for me,
Nor day nor night brings rest to pauvre Otille,
Poor Octoroone. What misery is mine--
A pariah even in my own home,
An outcast in my own beloved South.
Verily our forefather's sins descend
Upon their children to the third and fourth
Generation--Ah! cruel, cruel world,
O Nature! Why art thou so kind to me?
Why are only the human, inhuman?
O pitying winds--O moon with tender light--
Have you forgotten that I am not white?

(She pulls a crimson cord and the silvery tinkle of a distant bell is heard. Alcide is seen outside, through window.)

Alcide.

(Aside, speaks outside of window)

Confound that boat--who fathoms mischief finds
A woman at the bottom. But what means
This midnight orgie and that vision fair?
What evil menaces my angel now?
Ye Gods protect her--keep her safe from harm.
How gloriously beautiful is she,
White robed and framed in vines luxuriant,
Like some night blooming Cereus against,
The empurpled clusters of Wisteria.
See how yon envious cloudlet seeks to throw
This radiant blossom in the shade. Now thrusts
The moon her filmy veil of angry clouds
Aside to gaze untrammelled on Otille.
The pitying moonbeams tenderly caress
Her lovely, child-like face, and wind their long
White, slender fingers through her sable hair,
Like sunlight struggling through a dusky cloud.

(Enter ANGELE as if answering bell; goes to window)

There stands Angele, a shadow of the night
Too heavy for the moon to lift.

Angèle.

Here's me. (Angèle lights the lamp)
All married folks ought ter live ter dereselves,
And drink and fight and quarrel to dereselves,
'Tain't good to have outsiders prowlin' roun',
'Tain't 'spectable to say de least ob it.

Otille.

But this plantation is not ours. This place
Belongs to Viavant and we can't oust
Him from his heritage. We are his guests (pointing to a statue of Alcide)
His statue yonder (aside) graceful as a young
Apollo (aloud) should remind us of the fact.

Angèle.

Den you should hunt some udder house--dat's all.

Otille.

I did not ring you up to lecture me--
(Dreamily) Angèle.

Angèle.

Here's me.

Otille.

Angèle, I'm going to die.
You know all, all! Life's too hard. I can't bear
It my longer. I know not where I
Am going, but I know I'm leaving Hell.

Angèle.

Young Miss, don't spic day way. I mus' go call
Mars Weyburn.

Otille.

Ha! if you do, I'll be dead,
Ere he gets here! (Snatches a tiny stiletto from the folds of her hair)
And he'll be very glad.
He'd like to kill me, but he would not like
The scandal, nor would he enjoy the swing,
But he will not see me alive again--(Replaces stiletto)
This vial--(Takes a small bottle from her bosom)
Will make things pleasant for us all.

(Angèle snatches the vial from her mistress; empties the contents into a basin)

Angèle.

Young Miss, you's feelin' poorly. Go to bed
Agin. I'll fetch de Doctor quick. You needs
A mixtry fur to clean yer cistern out.

Otille.

Hush! I'm your mistress. You have but to mind
(Impulsively) How could I leave you, faithful Angélique
Forever, without telling you good bye,
I love you so. (Embraces Angèle.)
I cling to you Angèle.

Alcide.

(Aside) As hangs the parting Day on Twilight's skirts--
What sweetness wasted--Ciel! what sacrilege--
And look! old Angèle's tears are falling fast
Like rain from a dark cloud. What does this mean?

Otille.

I've only you and--and--and---

Angèle.

I knows all
About it. You can't tell me nothin' chile--
Love mus' have sot your heart ablaze. Your eyes
Is flashin' fire like two live coals. Poor gal--
You's got it putty bad, dat's shure--Don't cry.
It hurts your pore ole mammy. Dese ole eyes
Kin see what's what an' I am gwine to stan'
By you honey, if I gets lef' myself.
(Puts her arms around Otille)
I can't see my pore baby suffertin' so,
An' neber lif' a hand to help her out
De mire--or mebbe in de mire--God knows!
(Releases her)
Love an a powerful pison, and it need
A powerful counteract to antidote
De pison, sah.

Otille.

You mean an antidote
To counteract the poison.

Angèle.

Dat's it gal.
You fixed it right. I git things kind o' mixed
Jes' wait a minute chile till I gits back.
(Exit Angèle.)

Otille.

(Taking the tiny stiletto from her hair and feeling its edge)
Why do I hesitate? Am I afraid?
(Hears someone approaching and replaces it. Enter ANGÈLE.)

Angèle.

(Excitedly) Mars Weyburn's lyin' dead drunk on de floor,
I tried to wake him, but it warn't no use. (Exits)

Otille.

O God! How bitter is the cup of life,
Which I am drinking to its very dregs.

(Enter ANGÈLE with a pot of herbs and a small medicine chest. Lighting a spirit lamp, she brews a potion.)

Angele.

Dis stuff kin resurrect de dead--It grow
On de banks ob de Nile in Mexico.
I 'low dat's what de whale was eatin' when
He throwed Mars Jonah up. Yer see it's so
Disgustful dat nuthin don't want to stay
Long side o' hit, and don't yer see sah when
De whale tuk to dat stuff, Mars Jonah thought
'Twas 'bout time fur him to git up and git,
Dese yerbs would drive de dead out ob de grave,
It takes a heap ob ingregiuns to make
Dis Hoodoo drug--it's powerful medicine.
(While stirring the mixture she chants a Creole chanson, and afterwards she dances round the pot while it boils--then pours the decoction into a bowl to cool)

Alcide.

(Aside) What jugglery has old Angèle on hand?

(Angèle taking another powder from the medicine chest, she empties it into the bowl and drops the paper wrapper on the floor.)

Angèle.

(Stirring the mixture)

You allers knowed I was a kind o'yerb
Doctor--a Hoodoo Doctor ooman sah--
And honey--what you most particular needs
Is dis here Love-mixtry--Now drink dis stuff.

(Otille drinks the potion)

And you will see your lover's ghost to-night.
You see ole Mammy don't know how to read
And so she only knows de powders by
De color ob de wrapper.

(Picking up the empty wrapper)

Dis is green.

Otille.

You must be color blind--that's blue!

Angèle.

(Excitedly) Dat's green.
I wish dat I was dead, if dat ain't green.

Otille.

What difference does it make?

Angèle.

More than you knows!

(Angèle excitedly)

Gal! what's de matter? you seems kind o' dazed,
(Aside) I hab mistook de powder shure. De Lord
Forgib dis darkey dat mistake. (Trembling) I took
De blue wrapper instead de green; and God
Almighty knows what's gwine to happen nex'--
Dese ole eyes can't tell green from blue at night.

(Turning her back to Otille and slipping from her pocket a small flask of whiskey, she drinks a deep draught.)

Otille.

What ails you?

Angèle.

Jes' a weak spell.

Alcide.

(Aside, noting Angèle from without) Mountain Dew--
Angèle's panacea for all human ills.

Angèle.

(Aside) When things goes crooked take a whiskey straight
(Shakes her head dubiously as she looks at the empty blue paper on the floor.)
Dem yerbs will wipe de mem'ry clean away
Till sumthin powerful come to break de spell,
De Voodoos gits dat stuff from Mexico,
Dey say dat's what dey gib dat German Queen
Carlotta whomsoever she mought be. (Aloud)
Come honey don't you look so pale--you gwine
To see your lover's speerit shure to-night.
(Putting out the light)
Ghostes allers ginerally likes de dark,
So we will wait for debbilupments now.

(Alcide in a very light spring suit of clothes, taking advantage of the darkness having left hat and shoes in the yard, slips slowly and stealthily--)

Alcide.

(Just inside the room. Aside)
Shades of night shield me that I may unseen
And unsuspected solve this mystery.

Angèle.

Dere's gwine to be a suddent storm fore long,
I has a kind o' shivery, creepy feel.
(Alcide glides stealthily across the room)
(Mysteriously) Look yonder honey--don't you see dat ghost?
Mars Alcide's speerit--O! a ghost! a ghost!
A good run's better than a bad stand sah--
(Exit Angèle. Then slipping back softly to Otille and speaking in an affrighted whisper.)
I sees dat statue move and no mistake;
I heerd a noise like garments rustlin'--Jes'
As if a speerit passed--and 'fore de Lord
Sah--it's Mars Alcide's statue come to life.
Kase dese ole eyes sees it a stepping round.

Look! look! I sees it movin'--shure's you're born.
Dat statue's hanted honey--you ain't gwine
To ketch dis nigger dere agin--No sah.

(Alcide standing in the position of the statue and directly in front of it.)

Alcide.

(Aside)

Angèle unconsciously has given me
My cue. I will as best I can in these
Conditions personate my statue, which
So faithfully has personated me.
I have assigned myself a difficult
Role, but pushed to the last extremity
I'll do my best, though it should undo me.

Angèle.

Mars Alcide's statue's actin' moughty queer,
(Aside) I'm skeered at my own machinations sah.

Otille.

My burning love has fired those marble veins.
(Moving towards the Statue.)

Angèle.

Dat statue's hanted honey--don't go dere.
(She cannot restrain her excited mistress)

Otille.

(Approaching Alcide's statue.)

O step forth from this marble prison-house--
Alcide--beloved--fold me to thy breast--
Thy hot blood marks the ebb and flow of mine.
There is no life for me save in thine arms.
Sweet; could thy halting heart keep pace with mine,
Such love as ours would distance death itself.
Thine eyes, thy loving, dusky eyes, are stars
That guide my feet to Heaven--the only Heaven
There is for me. I'll light their smouldering fires,
I'll wake thee dullard with a burning kiss.
My fervid breath shall fan thy lips to flame,
My surging blood shall stir thy sluggish veins,
These scalding tear-drops, dews of woman's love,
Revive the roses on his cheek, O look!

I've found the love-philtre at last, see! see!
His lips are scarlet and his eyes aflame.
In all his manly beauty he is here.
Ye gods! he moves, he breathes, soul of my soul--
My life, my king! O joy! O ecstacy!

(Alcide embraces Otille then releases her, and slips stealthily away.)

Angèle.

(Aside) Dem yerbs is workin on her--shure's you're born.
(Alcide slips past Angèle and exits.)
(Aside) My Lor! dat ghost agin and no mistake.

Otille.

Where art thou? It is but a moment since
Thy subtle touch electrified my veins,
Thy kisses scorched my lips, my cheek, my brow.
What trick has fancy played my trusting heart?
I clasp a shadow, consciousness is dazed,
And what is life when thought is all unhinged?
As fall the petals from the full-blown rose,
My senses, one by one, desert their post;
My pulse-beats ebb with thine, I feel that thou,
My life art slipping from my grasp. And lo!
The bridegroom Death awaits me in thy stead.
Just when I lifted my exultant voice
I'm crushed beneath the juggernaut of Fate.
(With one cry she falls and sinks into a death-like trance. The old clock strikes one, two, three. She dies apparently.)

C U R T A I N.

A C T II.

CLOSE IN.
(Enter in front of stage, SHADRACH, MESCHACH and ABEDNEGO, a negro boy, and SNOWDRIFT, another negro boy.)

Shad., Mes. & Abed.

Say Snowdrift--did you know young Miss is dead?

Snowdrift.

Yes Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego,
Ob course I knowed it, long before you did.

Shad. Mes. & Abed.

Dey say young miss was hoodooed!

Snowdrift.

Mebbe so,
And Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego,
I seen a ghost in Massa Alcide's room.

Shad. Mes. & Abed.

You're lyin' Snowdrift.

Snowdrift.

No sah--dat I ain't--
It was a walkin round and cussin too.
And Shadrach Meshach and Abednego
I spec it's dere now, but I'm skeered to look.
(Exeunt.)

A C T II. SCENE I.

(Alcide's Bed room.
(Alcide's wet clothes are lying on the floor and he is discovered enveloped in a sheet, sitting on the side of his dismantled bed. Snowdrift and Shadrach Meshach and Abednego, peeping in the room at Alcide.)

Snowdrift.

(Aside) Look Shadrach Meshach and Abednego,
Look yonder--don't you see it--dat's de ghost.
(Exeunt.)

Alcide.

Like anger flashed from lovely woman's eyes
That sudden torrent burst from smiling skies.
In weather prophets never more trust I.
Confound this sheet--I wish I had a pin. (Looking over the floor for one)
The deuce take this impromptu robe de chambre,
That hath no shape, convenience--grace--nought save
A weird-like pallor in its countenance. (Finds a pin on the floor and picks it up)
Thanks, awfully for this old, crooked pin
Angèle, but I'm too dull to see the point.
(With difficulty pins the sheet around him. Holding up his dripping clothes)

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

My only suit of clothes available. (Dropping them
again and picking up his pocket-knife
from the floor where it had fallen.)
Well met good pocket-knife, my trusty blade,
Come sharpen up my wits with your keen edge
And rig this sheet into a dressing-gown,
And fashion thus a hasty pair of sleeves. (Cutting two
armholes in the sheet and thrusting his
arms through them.)
Emergency tailor--at thy deft touch--
This misfit garment which falls limp, which hath
No fit, may haply fall into a fit.
(Picking up his garments, one by one,
wringing the water out of them and hang-
ing them on the back of a chair.)
It was a lover's night--but all at once
When I slipped back again into the yard
The rain broke loose in torrents and it grew
So dark I could not find my hat and shoes.
Confound that boat--to think that I should miss
It and return to find my bedroom stripped
Of every comfort, and my trunk down town.
(Walks up and down the room)
I'm shaking like an aspen--but I'll shake
Till I'm as limbless as a cyclomed pine,
Ere I'll confess this escapade--and shake
My darling's faith in me--I'll die first like
A cowardly dog. Bless her trusting heart.
Otille! Otille! for such a kiss were I
A miser, I would give its weight in gold,
But I'm a prodigal and pay my life.
Otille! that kiss was Heaven--It almost warms
Me now. For such another I will go
To "Davy's locker"--(shivering) no time like unto
The present. When this chill shoves off and shifts
Corporeal latitudes--sooth--it may steer
Into my mind and cool its hot intent.
(Springing into bed)
To-day I was as hot as Hades--now
I am transported to the frigid zone,
This is no dumb chill--hear it chatter--zounds--
And not a blanket--nothing but this cold,
Uncanny sheet which soon may serve as shroud.
These nights are fickle as a woman's love--(arising)
Great Scott! that storm came up so suddenly
It almost blinded me--No wonder that
I could not find my hat and shoes. I left
Them in the garden-walk--get them I must

At any risk. They will betray me--I
Must get them quick--before the morning breaks.
(Looking grimly at his reflection in the mirror.)
I am unique in this attire--I'd pass
For a banshee--I'm well disguised I trust.
(Discovers a box of matches)
I'll take this box of matches--they may throw
Some light on my unlucky hat and shoes.
I trust that I may not participate
In the illumination.
(Exit. Enter SNOWDRIFT, frightened and screaming.)

Snowdrift.

Seek him Dash--
Ghostes eberywhere.
(Peeping back) Seek him--Dash--seek him.

(Enter ALCIDE with hat and shoes in hand, seizing the frightened darkey.)

Alcide.

What made you set that dog on me?

Snowdrift.

Please sah
It must have been some udder nigger--ouch!
I neber set no dog on you, Mars Ghost.
(Exit)

Alcide.

My hand is bleeding
(Wiping his hand on his shirt)
Dash has bitten me!
Great Sleuth-hound, where are the olfactory
Nerves of your much belauded pedigree?
The registered instincts of your noble line,
When you can't recognize a pal disguised
In his nocturnals--Go to--frauds--hounds--curs--
What drivelling idiots love makes of men.
Who filches pleasure pays ten times its worth,
Alas! alas! Who fathoms mischief finds
A dam-sel at the bottom--Curse them all.
(His teeth chattering)
If I escape the hydrophobia
I'll die of a congestive chill, I'm booked
For h--l, if I am not already there.
Alack--a day! a kiss, that cannot boast

A feather's weight, may cost a fool his life.
(Enter ANGELE, screaming.)

Angèle.
My Lor! You here? I 'lowed dat you was off
For good. (Crying bitterly)
Dere's dreadful news. Young Miss is dead!

Alcide.
Mon Dieu! That can't be true! She is not dead.
Hand me my clothes.

Angèle.
Dey's soakin wet. You lef'
De window open and it rained last night,
Dat's how it come. You's mighty keerless, chile,
La! dey's all bloody too--but how come dat?

Alcide.
Dash must have taken me for some one else.

Angèle.
Dat's curus how Dash didn't know you boy,
But nothin' ain't surprisin' sah, dese days!
Dese here Hoodoos been doin' wild work aroun'
Dese premises. Your statue walked about
Right smart last night. I suppose de jewelry
And de silver will be a travellin' next,
And when dey goes, dey will forgit de way
Back--you mind. I smells sulphur in de air.
But what you gwine to do about dem clothes?

Alcide.
What can I do? I have no others here.
I missed the boat and left my trunks down town.

(Enter SNOWDRIFT grinning.)

Angèle.
Here Snowdrift, regerlate dem clothes--make haste--
(Exit Snowdrift with Alcide's dripping
clothes. Exit Angèle.)

Alcide.
The savage hath more wit than cultured folk,
Our tailor is the power behind the throne,
He is the sun around which we revolve,

He marks the circle wherein we shall move,
Is it a suit of clothes that makes a man?
The lack of them doth mar him certainly,
To free our thoughts we fetter them with words,
To free our limbs we fetter them with clothes,
'Tis nought that in my Maker's image I
Am made? This lithe, nude, supple form, but mocks
My anxious, tortured heart. Otille! Otille!

(Enter ANGÈLE)

God, this anxiety is hell! hell! hell!

(Sinks into a chair and buries his face in his hands.)

Angèle.

(Crying)

It's purty bad chile, but it can't be holped.

(Angèle exits. Exit Alcide to adjoining room.)

C L O S E I N.

(Enter in front, two negro SERVANTS.)

1st servant.

Jes' yisterday young Miss was looking peart
And purty as a pink and now she's dead.

2nd Servant.

When folks dies suddent--Doctors allers calls
De sickness heart-failure to kiver up
Dere failin' to diskiver de disease.
It's moughty queer--I 'low dat somebody
Has hoodooed her--has put a spell on her.

(Exeunt servants. Enter 1st and 2nd OVERSEERS.)

1st Overseer.

This death is mighty sudden--'peers to me.

2nd Overseer.

Yes! she was well and hearty yisterday,
Doctor Le Sage says it's the heart-failure!

(Exeunt.)

(Death Chamber, small room near front.)
(Negro women, some weeping, crowd around the coffin to take a last look at their beloved mistress. Exeunt all but Angèle, who watches tearfully beside the corpse. Enter ALCIDE. Approaching Otille he stands beside her lifeless form, bows his head and weeps.)

Angèle.

(Aside) It breaks my heart-strings fur ter see a big
Strong man a cryin' like a baby, Sah.
Mars Alcide's all broke up--pore boy, pore boy.

Alcide.

Not even death can mar thy beauty, love.

Angèle.

Don't honey, don't take on so, folks will talk.

Alcide.

(Unheeding, softly murmurs) Otille---
(Her eyelids quiver, he stands spell bound)
(Aside) Am I demented? Is this real?
A smile seems hovering 'round her rose-bud lips.
She lifts her satin eyelids as a flower
Unfolds its petals to the sun--She lives.
(Aloud) Angèle, your mistress lives. (Aside)
Love wakes the dead.
I dare not stay. I shall betray myself.
(Aloud) Go tell her husband that she lives. I saw--
Her move--make haste--make haste--
(Exit Angèle)
(Aside) My love--my love! (Kisses her passionately and exits. Enter ANGÈLE and WEYBURN. Weyburn with the morning newspaper in his hand, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, takes a seat in a secluded corner of the room and reads. Enter a gentleman acquaintance.)

Angèle.

Young Miss ain't dead. Marse Alcide said he seed
Her move.

Weyburn.

Alcide's an ass--a lunatic---

Acquaintance.

I saw her stir.

Weyburn.

(Indifferently)

Possibly. I'm engaged--(reads)
I'm reading. Tell the Doctor if you wish.
(Continues reading)
(Aside) What's a dead nigger to an overseer?

Angèle.

(Apologetically)

Dis trubble has upset Mars Weyburn's mind.
(Rubbing Otille vigorously)
Please, Sah, fur Gord's sake, send de Doctor quick!
(Exit Acquaintance)
(Aside) My Lor! dat's scandalous, Mars Weyburn should
Respec' appearances, to say de least.

(Enter DR. LE SAGE.)

Dr.

She's dead I tell you. What's all this about?

CLOSE IN.

(Enter in front, ANGELE.)

Angèle.

(Aside) She ain't dead nuther. It's dem yerbs, dem yerbs--
But I ain't gwine to give myself away.
I'll go to Mars Alcide to-night and tell
Him 'bout dem yerbs. He knows dat she ain't dead.
(Exit Angèle)

CHANGE OF SCENE.

A C T II.

SCENE II: Metairie Ridge Graveyard.

(Professional Grab, Angèle, De Viavant and Dr. Gregorio. Grab untying and emptying a bag of tools, speedily begins work, the doctor assisting him.)

Dr.

(Aside)The night's as black as Angèle's face, save where
Yon straggling lanterns flicker in the sky.

Angèle.

Come Doctor, tell de Grab to come dis way.

Angele

(Directs them to a fresh mound)
Mars Weyburn says he's gwine to hab a slab
O' marble ober young Miss grave. (Aside) I heard
Him mutterin' to hisself dat his fine tomb
Was jes' fur white folks, dat was scandalous--

(O'Malley, the emaciated sexton plays the sentinel.)

Dr.

Upon the principle; it takes a ghost
To catch a ghost, O'Malley's proper stuff--
A fitting bone yard sentry--Yet forsooth
That phantom sentinel has human parts.
When he heard of a girl interred alive,
The mournful tale, set to the clink of gold,
Touched his kind, whiskey loving Irish heart.

Alcide.

(Relieves the Dr. and the Grab.)
I'll take a turn and let you take a rest.

(They hear a noise, they stop their work. Then all is silent. They recommence their labors; again they hear a strange rustling noise near by. They drop their tools.)

Angèle.

De Lor! ha' mercy. Dem's de graveyard ghosts,

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

I hears dere winding sheets a rustlin', Sah.
I'se feared dey gwine to speerit us away.
Jes' hear dat thunder--I'm skeered, Sah--ain't you?
(The Dr. smiles at her terrors, while the thunder rattles.)
Don't laugh when God's a talkin'. You is old
Enough to have politer manners, boy.

(Again the strange rustling sound; they look aghast at one another in the uncanny glare of the fitful lightning. Suddenly the voice of the owl "Too whoo, too whoo" rings through the sombre night.)

Dr.

(Resuming work) We have no time to lose.

Grab.

(Tries the earth with a borer)
We've nearly reached the coffin--pass the spade.
(Resumes his work)
Give me the grapplers with the ropes attached;
Now help me to adjust them, and we'll soon
Have everything O.K. Sirs. (Adjusts ropes and grapplers)
Hoist her up.
(They lift the coffin carefully and deposit it beside the grave. To Angèle.)
Get me the wrenchers and make haste!
(Footsteps are heard approaching)

Angèle.

(Drops the wrenchers) My Lor'!
Somebody's comin'!
(The sound is dying away in the distance. Work has ceased and each of the party is straining his ears to catch the faintest echo. Again footsteps are heard. Nearer and yet nearer they come.)
It walks like a ghost. (Angèle crouches tremblingly beside the tomb-stones, when several successive flashes of lightning reveal her with the whiskey bottle at her mouth. A clap of thunder startles her; she turns her head, she sees the pale, emaciated sexton, unknown to her and starts, shivers her bottle and screams.)

Lor'! it's a shure nuff ghost, a livin' ghost.
Why can't folks die all over, when dey dies
And not be comin' back to worriment
De livin'--

Sexton.
(In a light waterproof)
Och! begorra! it's to save
Funeral expinses that I'm walking round.
Shure, death's the mercifullest thing in life.

Grab.

(Applies wrenchers)
We'll have the coffin opened in a flash!

Dr.
(Lifts face cloth)
The casket's open. There your treasure lies.

Alcide.

Death's hand hath crushed both thee and me, my pearl.

Dr.
"Love's labor lost." It's useless; she's as dead
As a door nail. Poor fellow, poor, poor boy!
Experience will teach you that love plays
A minor part in these prosaic times.
This practical age accords sentiment
A back seat---

Alcide.
Hush! hush! graveyard jokes are grim;
Go home and leave me with my dead. She's mine--
(The others retreat)
Alive or dead, she's mine and mine alone!
Otille! Otille! You will not come to me,
So I have come to stay with you, Otille!
This graveyard with your dear, cold hand in mine,
Seems nearer Heaven than Heaven itself. She moves!
Am I the sport of fancy and my mind
A cursed, enchanted spot where kobolds hold
Their revels?

Dr.
Cease your ravings, madman! peace!
(Aside) 'Twas but a trance, the counterfeit of death!
(Aloud) The woman lives, but your wild rhapsodies

Our whereabouts, and disconcert our plans,
(Alcide lifts Otille in his strong arms)
Consider well, the danger of delay.
The coach awaits her--haste--be off with her.
Angèle and I will follow in your wake.
(Turns to Grab) Now lower the coffin and replace the earth
For God's sake hurry up and let's away.

(Alcide safely bears his precious burden through the blinding storm. Dr. Gre. and Angèle follow. Alcide steps and kisses Otille's pale face passionately. The lightning reveals the act.)

(To Alcide) Just put a brake on your affections. Let Discretion lead blind passion by the hand. (Exeunt.)

C L O S E I N.

(Enter in front, two negro LACKEYS.)

1st Lackey.

Doctors has a hankering for stormy nights.
De Doctor said I could expect him shure
Befo' de break ob day. He 'lowed dat he
Was gwine to bring his patient and a friend
Along wid him.

2nd Lackey.

I hears folks talkin' now.

(Exeunt.)

A C T II:

SCENE III: (Small room, near front. DOCTOR, ALCIDE, OTILLE and ANGELE.)

Otille.

(Reviving) They tell me I was buried, and you brought
Me back to earth--I owe my life to you,
Since you have resurrected me, I am
Your child, born of your love!

Alcide.

And, I'm your slave.

Otille.

Your voice awakened me, but I alas!
Remembered nothing of the past. How came
We here? And who am I and who are you?

Alcide.

I am your lover, your idolater,
I love you dearest, with a two-fold love.
A parent's sacrificial tenderness
With all a lover's fire, I bring to you.

Dr.

Alcide, this woman must be taken back
To her husband. There's nothing left for me
To do and I would like to wash my hands
Of this abominable business.
I heard a Mexican practitioner
Discourse on the peculiar properties
Of that strange herb, which Angèle by mistake
Administered to this unfortunate
Lady. I do not speak from personal
Experience, but the tradition claims
For this dread plant the fabled properties
Of the Egyptian Lotus. In that case
Her memory may be lost for years, perhaps
Forever. It is best to know the worst.

Alcide.

My dear girl, shall I take you home again?
You need a husband's constant care.

Angèle.

(Sadly shakes her head) No! no!
I'll hide her in my little shanty fust,
And work for her myself. Dere's plenty food
And close for my 'lill gal, in dese ole arms.

Otille.

I am at home. I know no other home.
Go tell the babe upon its mother's breast
To find a home. You are my world, my all.
Père, mère, frère, soeur, Dieu, Vous êtes tous dans un.

Dr.

(Wiping his eyes) A pretty pickle for a bacheler.
But I will stand by you, boy, come what may.

Otille.

Are you all tired of me? Why didn't you let
Me die in peace. Who am I? Where am I?
You say I'm resurrected? Is this Heaven?
I'd rather be welcome in Hell, than scorned
In Heaven, and am I nought to you, Alcide?
(She becomes again unconscious.)

Dr.

There is some mystery that neither you
Nor I can fathom. What is it Angèle?

Angèle.

Sah, I can't tell you nuthin--case I ain't
Got nuthin fur to tell, sah. Mars Alcide
Don't never let no harm come near dat chile
She's part ob dis ole nigger's heart, Sah.

Alcide.

You
Can trust me Angélique.

Angèle.

Yes, I can trus'
You. God bless my pore baby, (Aside) and de Lor'
Forgive me. (Crying) She's de cream ob dis pore yairth.

Alcide.

Henceforth, I'll act a brother's part to her.
Are not all suffering humanity
Brothers and sisters? Aye! The Convent's strong
Protecting arm--shall keep her safe from harm.

C U R T A I N.

A C T III.

Three years later.
CLOSE IN.
(Enter in front, ALCIDE and OTILLE.)

(Otille, now widow Weyburn, dressed in deep mourning)

Alcide.

Two long, long weary years have passed love since,
That railway accident, which widowed you.
When can I claim this dainty hand, my sweet?
"And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea,
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me"
So sings the poet, chérie--
Ah! sweetheart mine:
I'm that sunlight, thou the earth,
I that moon, and thou the sea,
And these kissings love, are worth
All the world to me.
(Tries to kiss her, but she resists him)

Otille.

I've searched the mouldy niches of the Bards
For my ideal of perfect love, and lo!
Behold my pearl of poesy. I've found
It in the sonnet Day, in which the Sun
And Day are lovers. Not the Sun and Earth.
The Earth sleeps, while the Sun's away, although
She wakes at his return. Nor yet the Sea
And Moon. The Sea can live without the Moon,
Although the surging of its mighty heart,
Its quickened pulse and swelling bosom tell
That it is not unconscious of the Moon's
Soft glance. But Day, fair, faithful Day, can no
More live without the Sun, than I can live
Without thee. At night she sleeps not, but dies
Because her lover's face is turned from her,
Another Day will welcome his return.

Alcide.

And would you die dear, should my face be turned
From you. Do you love thus, Otille?

Otille.

Thou art
The air I breathe, my light, my life. When I
No longer saw the love-light in thine eyes
I drooped, as faints the Day when shades the Sun
His vision with a murky cloud, but burst
From the tomb at thy warm embrace, as Spring
Kisses the seed, that lies buried into bloom.
Hast thou not often told me that thy love
Was so God-like, so powerful it would
Not loose its hold, but wrestled hard with death,
And snatched me from its clutches. Then am I
Not thine, forever thine and only thine.

(Her lover snatches her to his breast)

Alcide.

Now let me hear that poem of perfect love---

(Otille releases herself, recites)

D A Y.

With Love's impassioned lips, the Sun-God kissed
The Morning into life--then lightly drew
From blushing Dawn her coverlet of mist,
And caught her to his breast and changed her through
Love's crucible to perfect Day. But lo!
Though 'round her form his shimmering tresses play
And drop their gold upon her bosom's snow
From charms so lightly won, he turns away.

Behold! he stabs her with his parting glance
And spills her blood upon the evening skies.
With waxen tapers, watcher stars advance
While mourner Night-winds croon her dirge and cry;
How soon the sun will kiss another day
And in these arms another victim lay.

When I was cold in death, did you not kiss
Me into life with Love's impassioned lips?
Is it not true Alcide? O! say you like
The poem, say that it is beautiful.

Alcide.

It is the pulsing of a human heart,
A loving woman's heart, I hear it throb
In every line. Love is a sorcerer
Who makes a poem of prosaic life. (Exeunt.)

SCENE II:

(Street. Enter OTILLE and ALCIDE.)

Alcide.

I felt no interest in the play to-night
I saw your husband's ghost. It haunted me.

Otille.

How strange that I cannot remember him,
That I have no remembrance of the past.
I first commenced to live when your dear voice
Recalled me from the tomb. My early youth,
My married life is all a blank to me.

Dr.

(Overtakes Otille and Alcide)

My friends, there's mischief brewing, I just heard
Some Dagoes, speaking in their native tongue.
It seems that Weyburn's death was but a false
Report--that he has heard about his wife--
That he under a pseudonym attempts
Disguise, but Montebello is the spouse;
They say of Inez, Weyburn's paramour,
And is not one to brook an insult, but
Will make it pretty hot for Weyburn here.

(Exit Dr. Gre. Two figures are gliding stealthily along the street.)

Otille and Alcide.

Can it be possible that Weyburn lives?

Weyburn.

(Aims at Alcide)

I'll hit him if I die for it.

(Misses Alcide and shoots through his high hat.)

Inez.

Give me
The pistol, quick and I'll spoil Madame's face!

(The bullet grazes Otille's shoulder; taking advantage of the darkness and the confusion, Weyburn and Inez escape. Otille screams and falls. A crowd gathers around her. Alcide is silent.)

Alcide.

(To Otille) You are not badly hurt, I'll call a cab

And drive you to your door, and then good bye
Until I find Weyburn alive or dead.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE III:

(The Mafia.
A Louisiana Marsh by torchlight. A wood-cutter with his dog. Detective Hennessey and others, some carrying torches.
A dead body has been found by the wood-cutter's dog in an improvised grave, and is awaiting the coroner.
Enter REPORTER with note-book.)

Reporter.

Give me some points, old sleuth. (Aside) I've got a beat.

Detective.

(To Reporter)
The coroner will be here pretty soon,
And still that woman, Inez has not come;
She is the wife of this man's murderer;
And was the mistress of this murdered man.
Whose real name is Weyburn, I have learned.
She told me she could prove her husband's guilt.
The time is up--(Looks at his watch)--and still she is not here.
She promised that she would by trick, decoy
Some Dago fellows here that saw it all.
(Points to the dead man.)
A wood-cutter's dog found him lying dead,
There in the marsh, just as you see him now.

Rep.

Peacefully he sleeps in his improvised
Grave of withered leaves, twigs and lattania.
Poor fellow, he found a soft berth at last.
(Aside) The Times won't scoop the Picayune to-night.
(Enter INEZ and DAGOES.)

Detective.

Here comes the woman and her witnesses.

(Inez, wife of Jésu Christi Montebello, hands a paper to the detective.)

Inez.

Here we are Mr. Hennessey, at last,
I found this note to Weyburn on the floor
After the row, the night of the mélée.
Maybe that's why he came to us at eight.

Detective.

(Reading the missive aloud)
"I'll be alone to-night at eight, Inez."

Inez.

I never wrote it. Jésu Christi must
Have written it, for he writes English well.

Detective.

(Aside) Undoubtedly it served as a decoy.

Inez.

The note fell from his pocket, I suppose.

Detective.

(Aside) While he fell into Montebello's trap.

Inez.

(Viewing the corpse)
That's him, the man that Jésu Christi stabbed.

Detective.

Who's Jésu Christi?

Inez.

Montebello, sir
And Jésu Christi is his Christian name.

Detective.

(Aside) A Christian name, but not a Christian act.
A pretty son of God--the scurvy scamp--

Inez.

Well, Jésu Christi is my husband, sir,
And he cut Weyburn's throat, just so--(Passing her hand across the Detective's throat)
I seen
Him do it, Giovanni, Miguel,
Mazzini and Luigi seen him too (pointing respectively to each.)

Detective.

Does this Italian woman speak the truth?

(Mazzini shakes his head from side to side)

Mazzini.

No, Signor----no see Jésu killee man.

Luigi.

Me no see nodding, no hear nodding, me
Go sleepy all time.

Miguel.

Mee too.

Giovanni.

Me de samee.

(Inez is struck with an ominous dread at their sullen reticence and weeps bitterly.)

Inez.

Oh don't tell Jésu I gave him away--
Santa Maria! he will murder me.
(Aside) Look! there's Conchéta, his old mother, she
Must have been sneaking round, so she could hear.
--Save me--save me--Jésu will murder me.

(Enter CONCHÉTA.)

Conchéta.

We'll fix you. We'll get even with you yet.
(Gesticulating, frantically throwing herself on the ground, beating her breast, and tearing her hair in a frenzy at this wanton violation of the sacred laws of the vendetta. Then raising herself to her full height, lifting her withered, prophetic arm, like a sibyl of old, she hisses into Inez's ear)
May the Vendetta's lightning strike your heart.
(Swift upon her words, a rifle shot whizzes from some ambuscede. Inez dies.)
Die traitress, die by the Vendetta's hand.
So perish all who violate its oaths.
Hail! Holy Virgin! Jésu is avenged!

C U R T A I N.

A C T IV.

(Plantation negro minstrels. Negro songs and dances with banjo accompaniment. Exeunt.)

SCENE I: (Guest chambers of the De Viavant Plantation.
(In summer house and shrubbery, same as in Act I, Scene 1.
(At rise of curtain, ANGÈLE discovered with her small black boy SNOWDRIFT, watching beside her mistress, now Madame de Viavant. Enter DR. GREGORIO, looking at Otille, his patient, who is sleeping.)

Dr. G.

Do not disturb your mistress. Let her sleep.

Angèle.

Young miss is poorly Doctor since de day
Dat she and Mars Alcide got married sah
And dat was 'bout a year after dey found
Mars Weyburn in de bushes, back o' town.
I'm all broke up about dis bigness, chile
My heart's a-shakin' like a yarthquake. I'm
Jes' worrited to death about young miss.
You knows Sah, how impatienate dat boy
Was for his weddin' nuptials. Why he could
Scarcely wait for de ceremony, Sah.
Well, him and her was like two turkle doves
A billin' and a cooin' in de nest,
About as happy as folks gits to be
Dis side ob Heaven; when one fine mornin' dis
Rapscallion, Snowdrift, you knows him well, Sah.
Dis black imp ob mine sot de house a fire.
(Snowdrift tries to slip out.)
Snowdrift--stay here--whar I kin keep my eye
On you! folks nebber knows what debblement
Dere chillen's up to, when dey's out ob sight.
At dat partikler time, de fright was more
Dan she could stand. Dey fotched her to de guest
Room whar she and Mars Weyburn used to stay
When dey was visitors here, and she lay
Onsensible ontil dat orful night
When she come to, and found herself back here,
(Snowdrift gets behind Dr. and Angèle, and amuses himself by turning somersaults)
Here, in her same ole bed, her same ole room
And de same ole clock wid its even step,

Tramp--tramp--tramp--treading on de heels o' time,
And trampin' on her pore young heart. I 'low
She thought she'd see Mars Weyburn too, and hear
Him cussin' of her like he used to do.
(Snowdrift somersaults out of room)
I 'low it was dat clock what's bringin' back
De ole time misery. Jes' as some ole tune
Will take us way back yonder. When I hears
De banjo strikin' up, I'm in de field
Agin, a hoein' cotton, boy, in dem
High ole times, when niggers was niggers, Sah
And didn't have no doctor's bills to pay.

Dr. G.

You've never thrust your wealth on me, old girl.
Where do you hide your shekels, Madame Dives?
(Exit Dr. Gregorio and Angèle. Otille slumbers peacefully, a dim night lamp is burning. Pater ALCIDE, treads softly, worn out with watching he throws himself on a sofa near the couch of Otille and falls asleep. Otille awakes to consciousness.)

SCENE II. Same.

Otille. (Arising)

I wonder where I am. My head feels strange,
My mind seems so confused; now let me try
To gather up my wandering thoughts and give
Them shape. A former life comes back to me--
O God, am I the hated Octoroone?
As opes the flower its petals, Memory
Unfolds her secrets, one by one, to me.
Is this the drunken Weyburn here beside
Me? And am I his wife, his wretched wife?
And I had dreamed that I was Alcide's bride
That every aching void his presence filled,
But this suspense is unendurable--
I'll solve this riddle--come what may.
(Striking a match and holding it above her husband's head.)
Alcide,
My husband! you have brimmed my cup with bliss--
(Softly) O joy! restrain thy ecstasy--lest thou
Disturb the slumbers of my well-beloved.
I'm blessed beyond my wildest dream (kneeling) My God,

I lift my voice in gratitude to Thee.

(Approaches the old time clock)

Have I not heard that clock somewhere before?
Tick--tick, it rings me back to bygone hours,
O God! I live again that fetal night,
The skeleton long buried is unearthed.

(Going towards the blooming night Jasmine which still sends its perfumed breath through the open window.)

The faint, sweet odor of the Night Jasmine
Is wafting me upon its fragrant wings
Across the vasty sea of vanished years,
The Lethean cup no longer drowns my grief
A subtile perfume or familiar air
Will oft recall the scenes of other days
And so that tick-tick brings remembrance back
To me. The spell is broken. Wizard clock!
Thou art the mystic key that has unlocked
The portals of Lang Syne. Grim memory holds
The mirror up to me. I gaze aghast
O! Miserable present! wretched Past!

(Sinking into a chair and burying her face in her hands, overcome with sickening memories. Pause. Then exit. Angèle enters, standing at open door.)

SCENE III.

Angèle.

Young miss ain't had her sheer ob misery yit.
Here comes Luella wid dat brat ob hern.
She says dat boy is hers and Weyburn's son;
What chic dat hussy has to try and rob
My pore, pore sufferin' baby ob her rights.

(Enter LUELLA and her young SON.)

Luella.

I wish to see Madame de Viavent.

Angèle.

She ain't at home.

Luella.

(Taking a seat) She is at home--I saw
Her at the window just as I came in.

Angèle.

(Aside) What impudence! What style dat rag puts on!
My Miss is allers out to sich low down,
White trash like her. I takes dat on myself.
(Aloud) You makes a mistake. My young miss is out.

(Otille and her father Don Oliviera appear at door.)

Otille.

That low Juella, Weyburn used to keep
Is in this room, and I shall soon find out
What business brings that woman to my house.

Don O.

You must not speak to such a character.

Otille.

I have resolved to have this mystery solved.

(Don O. vainly tries to detain Otille. Angèle rushes to his assistance. Enter OTILLE.)

(To Angèle) Don't interfere with me.
(To Juella) What do you wish
With me? I am Madame de Viavant.

Juella.

I come to tell you, I am Weyburn's wife,
And this here boy is ourn. When Weyburn thought
That you was dead, he married me because
This brat was his, but now since you've turned up
I don't get Weyburn's money. But folks say
That you ain't white and I can git it all.
But I won't go to law, if you'll give up
Without a fuss. But I must git my rights,
Though Weyburn ran off with that Inez, wife
Of Jésu Christi, my certificate
Shows I am Weyburn's wife and no mistake.

(Enter DON OLIVIERA unnoticed.)

They say your mother was your father's slave,
An Octoroone whose name was Natalie;
Your father had her taught till she became
A smart, fine lady; then when you was born
He went and married her. That's gospel true.

Don O.

(To Juella) You are a liar--leave this house.

(Pointing to the door with hand uplifted)

Luella. (Pounding the floor with her parasol)

Touch me
If you dare--(advancing brazenly towards him)
Touch me---

Don O.

No thanks, excuse me--
I would not touch you with a ten foot pole.
(To Otille) She knows how proud your husband is and hopes
To bully you out of your legal wealth,
And get it as hush-money for her son.
Come, come, my child, this is no place for you.
(To Luella) With men my rapier point responds for me
But I hold no discourse with gabbling drabs.
(Leading Otille to door. Luella paces the floor like an infuriated tigress.)

Luella.

Insulted! ha! them fools shall pay for this.

Otille.

(Excitedly) Who am I? What am I? Pray tell me sir?

Don O.

Child, calm yourself and I will tell you all:
That rabble merits only your contempt.
Association with inferiors
Put drags you to their level. They can find
No proof to verify what they assert.
In Europe where you married Weyburn, race
Is no impediment to legal ties.
But this concerns you not. Child, you are white.
(Exit Otille.)

Luella.

(Furiously) Will she give up?

Don O.

Emphatically no!
You only beat your head against the wall,
Your efforts are in vain: you have no proof.

Luella.

You two ain't goin' to git ahead of me
You bet. You villainous old hypocrite.
(Exeunt.)

(Enter OTILLE and ANGÈLE.)

Otille.

Array me in my bridal robes Angèle
And garland me with blossoms, rich and rare.

Angèle.

Who is yer gwine to marry now chile?

Otille.

My bridegroom's kiss will quench these raging fires. Death.
(Pointing to Angèle) Happier yon sparrow in her lowly flight
Than though she were a princely falcon's mate
Whose eagle-eyed, but feebly-pinioned brood
Could neither reach the eerie high nor be
Content within the lowly mother nest.

Angèle.

Look here, chile. What you take me for? I ain't
No sparrer. When I gits wings, dey ain't gwine
To be dat pattern, and don't you fergit.
My Lor! she got dem luny spells agin.

Otille.

No Angèle, I could almost wish that I
Were mad and all this wretchedness a freak
Of Fancy. Make me beautiful to-day;
My dusky splendors irresistible,
That I may ravish Alcide's doting eyes.
That I may in his memory dwell, as some
Sweet vision of departed loveliness.
Some joy ecstatic, yet intangible,
That I may not pollute him with its touch.
(Exit Otille. Angèle hearing Alcide approaching, advances to meet him.)

Scene IV, same.

(Enter ALCIDE.)

Angèle.

Don't git skeered honey, tout a l'heure young Miss
Gwine git all right. She jes a little quare
She wild, she say she gwine to marry Death,
And so I up and tele her I wouldn't keer

To tackle more'n one husban' at a time.
She 'lowed dat I'm a sperrer. Does I look
Like one? We niggers ain't no high-flyers, Sah,
But 'pears like we's a leetle bit above
Dem hoppin' things. Dat chile ain't like herself.
There's sumthin pressin' on her heart, dat keep
Her studyin' too much--It's jes worriment
Ob de mind; when I gits to studyin right
Smart, Sah, I most gits luny myself, fur
A fac'. (Enter OTILLE superbly dressed in bridal array, with flowers wreathed about her. She reclines on elegant divan. Angèle runs to her and throws a light coverlet over her)
Chile, don't you want de kiver on?

Otille.

No! (throwing off the cover)
But I want my husband--send him here.
(Exit Angèle)

Alcide. (Approaching his wife Otille)
What is the matter? Are you ill, Otille?

Otille. (Arising)
Alas! a wound no earthly power can heal,
Prepare to hate your once beloved wife,
I'll wear the scarlet letter, ere I'll hide
My shame like some foul cancer in my breast.
Come close, and let me whisper in your ear
The cruel words--je suis une octoroone.
Why don't you shoot us both and end it all?

Alcide.

Because I am your husband and I love
You. It is meet that I should help you bear
Your burden, whatsoever it may be.
(He folds her in his arms)
Come, lay your head in its accustomed place,
My wife "whom God hath joined let no man put
Asunder". Suffering but more firmly knits
True hearts together--hearts that beat as one.

Otille.

Two husbands I've deceived unwittingly,
When first I wed, what knew I of that dread
Secret whose fatal shadow, crossed my path
At every turn? When Hymen came again
Some merciful Nepenthe exorcised

The olden grief, and from my tortured brain
Remembrance faded like the mists of morn.
The chords of memory first were overstrained,
And as the bow-string tightly drawn, rebounds
With vigor when the tension is relaxed,
Now seems my mind a mirror of the past.

(Alcide walks the floor. This revelation has staggered him, though his unselfish nature gives no sign, he inwardly recoils from the blot upon his noble name. The struggle is but momentary.)

Alcide.

(Aside) An unexpected blow that would unnerve
The iron-hearted. Great God, give me strength.
Pauvre innocente, how can I solace her?
Is wedlock but a summer haven? No!
True marriage is a sheltering rock that lifts
Its towering head above the tides of Fate.
Shall I desert my post because I hear
The cannon's thunder? Shall I close my heart
When honor, duty and undying love
Are knocking loudly at its portals? No.
(Aloud, embracing Otille)
I would renounce the Universe for you
My wife and for our child in embryo.
Give me your crimson lips, and let me drink
Their nectar--you are all the world to me--
Do you remember when a thirsty knife
Once probed your finger, how in sportive mood
I let our surgeon-friend, Gregorio
Transfuse your precious blood into my veins?
When you remand those crimson drops, Otille
Will I disclaim the heart whose lava streams
Are mingling with my own. The die is cast--
Beloved--I am yours without recall.

Otille.

Your chivalry is very sweet to me,
Your sense of honor is beyond all price
But to our country and posterity
Do we not owe our highest duty? Aye!
Upon those sacred altars should not we
If needs be, offer up our paltry selves?

The Cuban relief, and Cincinnati interested Israel.
Commissioners issued life-rights of zero.
The clubrooms of Dunedin stand exceptionally,
And as the lumbering supply of opinion, responsible
With vigorous non-rice tension in nations,
The advance my pilot a mirror of the years.

(Lights raise the lights. This revelation
has occupied him, though his mind-train
returns given re-entry, he invariably re-
calls from the dark upon his subtle theme.
The principle is not unknown.)

Alcide.

(Aside) An unexpected blow that could unnerve
The iron-hearted. Great God, give me strength!
Having achieved it, how can I relinquish it?
Is modesty but a coward's honour? No!
This revelation is a vital reading near the light
Its revealing hour alone the victim of fate.
Could I desert my post because I have
The salmon's tunnel? Shall I cling to lonely
Man hours, long and lingering love
Are knocking lamely at the portal? No.
(Aloud, addressing Gaston)
I would a message to the Minister Sir—you
My wife and for our child in exile.
Give me your answer right, and let me guess
Their messengers are all the world to me—
In your remember such a debtor in life
Have produced your fingers, but in spite have
I lost our sympathy-friend, regarded
Therefore your question Friend Jim by saying
Then you received three answer dangers, Adelie
Will I disembark the heart whose lure a friend
Are multiplied with my one. The life is crystal-
Matured—I am joined without regret.

Adelie.

Your Adelaide is very sweet to me.
Have sorts of power to bequeath all prize
Our-to-our country, and possibly
In me not use our kitchen water? Ahal
Your hand shows the dialed sensible not we
Is moods be, attire up our poetry delivery

Alcide.

High priestess ho! there's murder in the air--
Is self-destruction justifiable?
What strange fanaticism is this that cries
For human blood. Go to--if woman could
She'd snatch the reins from God Almighty's hands.

(Exit Alcide.)

Otille's Appeal.

It was but yesterday the sunlight thawed
My frozen heart, and brought me two-fold bliss--
A few short months, I've been a happy wife.
And now, O God! when holy motherhood
Its shining halo weaves about my brow,
Black memory's grimy finger tarnishes
Its gold, and snatches from my yearning breast
Its buds of promise--Pity me, O God!
With ignominy I am long acquaint
But God! I swear that never child of mine
Shall bear the contumely that I have borne.
That curse, that damning curse shall not descend
On my ill-starred, unconscious progeny.

(She takes a vial of slow but deadly poison from her bosom.)

Farewell, Alcide, farewell, I die for thee.
I offer up this lacerated heart
A sacrifice upon the shrine of love. (She weeps)
Farewell, Alcide, but oh! not yet--not yet--

(She replaces the vial)

O! let me see my husband once again,
The sight of his dear face is like a gleam
Of sunlight on my shadowed life. O let
Me drink once more the music of his voice,
Whose love-notes drop in pearls of melody
Upon my thirsting soul. O let me feel
The fire of passion burning in his lips
As they repeat: "Otille, I love but thee".
How can I leave thee, husband of my heart?
How can I tread alone the ghostly halls
Of ghastly death, so far, my sweet, from thee,
Whose tender love has been the one bright ray
That has illumined my perpetual night.
Farewell! Light of my Life! If there's a God
I call on Him in this benighted hour
To save me from these waves of wild despair
That madly toss me in their frantic arms.
Great God, who has created me, I am
Thy suffering child. O help me, Father mine!

Alfieri.

Nay, relentless lot! Seem'st determined to do all--
In multi-sanguine (illegible)
Thou'st strange dismayed me in this our grave
Yet issues blood. Do re--u' [illegible] could
She's [illegible] the music from Dal Negro's sonata.

(Exit Alfieri.)

Philip's Lament.

It was but yesterday, the spiritual theme
Of Frederick Barbarossa, and I sought to be--[illegible]
A few short months. It's like a lovely dream.
And now, O cruel, what [illegible] modulated
Its advancing half-[illegible] chords by heart,
Black memory's grim figure [illegible]
Its gold, and wrinkled from my pressure [illegible]
Its hues of [illegible]--Why yes, O God!
With [illegible] I am [illegible]
But Good! I never [illegible] of [illegible]
Shall [illegible] the one world that I have known.
That [illegible], [illegible] shall [illegible]
On my [illegible], [illegible] progress.

(She [illegible] [illegible] but [illegible]
[illegible] from her [illegible].)

Farewell, Alfieri, farewell. I die for [illegible].
I offer up this [illegible] life
A sacrifice upon the altar of love. (The [illegible])
Farewell, Alfieri, but ah! [illegible]--[illegible]

(She [illegible] the [illegible])

O! let me see my [illegible] once again,
The light of his [illegible] face is like a [illegible]
Of sunlight on a [illegible] life. O let
Me drink once more the music of his voice,
Those [illegible] long in [illegible]
Upon my [illegible] soul. O let me feel
The [illegible] of passion [illegible] in his lips
As they repeat: "Odilia, I love but thee".
How can I leave [illegible] of my [illegible]
How can I [illegible] the [illegible]
Of [illegible] death, no [illegible], [illegible], [illegible]
Where [illegible] have [illegible] the [illegible]
That has illumined my [illegible] nights.
Farewell! [illegible] of my [illegible]. If there's a God
I call on him in this [illegible]
To save me from these [illegible] of [illegible]
That [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].
[illegible], who has [illegible] me, I am
My [illegible] [illegible]. O help me, Father mine!

I tremble for my infant yet unborn;
Canst thou forget thy grown up girl, who cries
Aloud to thee? Hélas, mon Dieu, mon Dieu.
Is there no pity even in high Heaven
For such as I? Dear Christ I kneel to Thee,
I bathe Thy feet with burning tear-drops wrung
From out my tortured soul. Dost feel their fire?
Is there no pathos in their silent prayer?
Hast thou a heart of stone? Art deaf and dumb?

(Drinks the poison!

Pardon mon Dieu--I knew not what I do.
Such grief is not responsible, O God
This cruel stroke has blinded me; alas!
My bleeding feet can find no heavenly road.
And O! earth's cruel thorns to madness goad.

(Enter ALCIDE !

Alcide, think you that suicide is wrong?

Alcide.

Of course, sweetheart, but tell me, why you ask?
What darksome thoughts have gathered in that cloud
That frowning sits on your once sunny brow?
A suicide is damned eternally.
For him there is no hope beyond the grave.

Otille.

Methinks 'tis nobler far to sacrifice
Sweet self, to slip life's troublous sheath, than live
That others may be crucified. Aye! Aye!
Though Heaven itself is lost to us thereby.

Alcide.

I could not live one hour without thee love.
I'd follow thee to Hell, for there's no Heaven
For me, my sorceress, apart from thee.

Otille.

But I'm an Octoroone. Shall I disgrace
My Husband's proud, aristocratic race?

Alcide.

Unsullied hast thou kept thy spotless robes--
No fair Circassian has a whiter skin,
A purer soul than thine. Come, let me kiss
These rain drops from my drooping flower, but oh!
How pale my lily is.

Otille.

Ah! c'est ne rien
I will be better soon. I'm better now.
(She swoons. Alcide picks up empty bottle near Otille and believes her dead.)

Alcide.

The death-head on this empty vial solves
This mystery. We'll die together, love.
(Shoots himself, Servants hear pistol-shot and rush in.

Otille.

(Reviving) My God! My God! Alcide! what have you done?

Alcide's Valet.

He is not dead, quick_quick_the ambulance.

C U R T A I N.

A C T V. SCENE I:

MAD SCENE:

(Amphitheatre of the Charity Hospital. Professors, students, etc. present.)

(At rise of curtain ALCIDE under the influence of chloroform. OTILLE enters in her bridal robes, startling the grave assembly.)

Dr. G.

My dear Madame de Viavant, you must
Go home again. This is no place for you.
Angèle, why did you bring your mistress here?

Angèle.

She jumped into de kerridge Sah and made
Me come along. I ain't responsible
For her quare doings. She's my mistis; I
Ain't hern. I 'lowed you 'spicioned dat before.

Otille.

Pray tell me where my husband is; I heard
Them say that he was here. (She sees him and shrieks)
He's dead! he's dead!
God pity me.

Dr. G.

He is not dead! He sleeps.

Otille.

But why did he come here to sleep? How strange.
(She takes some flowers from her dress and tries to put them in his hand.)
I brought some flowers for you, Alcide--awake--
Lift thou the deep fringed curtains from thine eyes--
And let me see once more the light of day.
(Pointing to him)
Behold yon eagle with the broken wing,
That beats his breast in vain attempt to rise
And lift his royal plumage from the mire
Ah! who would mate the eagle with the wren
And cripple both, by beckoning pinions frail
To uplands far beyond their fluttering scope
And dragging kingly feathers in the dust?
(Ghost rises. Otille turns from Alcide grows pale and cries)
A ghost! a ghost! It is my mother--

(With eyes distended) Look
It's gone, there's something ghostly in the air.
(She shudders and sings.)
(Shadow song.)
Who has not felt the touch of shadowy hand
Like memory weird of half-forgotten land,
Or shuddered at some chill and ghostly blast
That seemed to come from grave of ages past?

O weep not then beloved when I am dead,
Like dreamless sleep that Lethean grief had sped
Till Memory, cruel Nemesis, awoke
And played upon my heart-strings till they broke.

May kind Death send some sweet surcease to me
Though it obliterates all trace of thee,
Then I perchance far from this vale of tears,
May lightly step adown the future years.

1st Student.
(Approaching her)
The doctor says you must not stay in here
That it will be too great a trial for you.

Otille.
(Lifting her hands to heaven)
"Whom God hath joined let no man put asunder"--
(Crouching beside her husband)
O let me stay and I will be thy dog,
Thy slave, thy faithful octoroone till death.
How could I leave thee, husband of my heart?

2nd Student.
You cannot force her from her husband. You
Could easier tear a tigress from her young.

(Enter DON O.)

Don O.
Come, daughter--come, this is no place for you.

Otille.
I'm not your daughter. Did you think I was?
And where think you a wife's place is, if not
Beside her husband? Ha! ha! ha! When I
Seek wisdom from a fool, I'll call again
Great God! I too had once a father. Aye!
Curse his black heart that no white skin could hide

(Pity sweep disappointed.) Love
It's gone, there's something physical in the air.
(She shudders and sighs.)
(Gaudio sings.)
Who has not felt the weight of sadness, need
Like memory waking to half-remembered love,
Or shuddered at some child and wondered, half afraid
That sweetness to come from every of such peace?

O weep not! It is darkness when I go blind,
Like a mountain along that thunder-girdled sound
Will-lament, proud Tamerlane, moons
And planets burn by lover-darkness till dawn breaks.

My kind death will come when I recognize in me
Though it only answers all areas of time,
Then I pendulum-to-far from this valley of tears,
May lightly also enter the future years.

Isa Stanton.
(Expressing pity.)
The doctor says you don't get rest. It's true
That it will be the cause of total for you.

Duzzio.
(Listening for Gaudio to answer.)
"Then God hath joined [illegible] let no man put asunder"—
(Suddenly hearing her laughing.)
O let me stay and I will be the good.
The clown, my fellow, pathetically will depart.
How could I leave here, [illegible] or my country

Gina Ghelardi.
You cannot [illegible] from her [illegible]. You
Could easily take a [illegible] from our young.

(Gaudio sings.)

Don G.
Down, down, down—down, down to the place for you.

Gaudio.
I'm at your disposal. Did you think I was?
And where [illegible] your [illegible]'s place is, if not
[illegible] [illegible] but let them I
[illegible] windows from a [illegible], I'll call again
[illegible] God! I [illegible] a [illegible]. Ayal
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Who murdered him--(pointing to her husband)
The pride of his proud race
My father--was it worth the sacrifice?
Look at this wreck. How couldst thou justify
This fiendish crime? O how couldst thou descend
To sin so black? Are not your women fair?
Have you no power to look beyond the hour?
Are ye more slaves to passion? O have ye
No pity for your helpless progeny?
Behold my husband, cut down in his prime,
The flower of chivalry lies bleeding. At
Your door his murder lies. On your d------ head
My father, be his blood. Where canst thou hide?
No grave is deep enough to shroud thy shame.

Don O.

What strange hallucination has upset
Your once well balanced mind?

(He moans)

C'est trop, c'est trop.

Angèle.

(Aside) De chile's crezzy.
(Exit Otille)
(Aloud) Wait, honey, mammy's gwine
Wid you.
(Otille turns back and waits)
Is you forgittin dat it ain't
Ladyfied to be galivantin round
Strange places all alone by yourself? Why
De Lord only knows what mought happen you.
(Exit Otille and Angèle)

Dr. G.

Another victim to the curse that hangs
Even as the sword of Damocles above
Our unsuspecting heads. How thoughtlessly
Is sowed the seed that brings such bitter fruit.

Don O.

I never realized this crime before.

Dr. G.

Men are stone blind to their monstrosities,
And yet no worse than others are our men.
But minions we to tyrant circumstance.
From our escutcheon we'll efface this blot,

Vue moderen ism--(pointing to her husband)
My father--one is worth the aristocrat
Look at this world. For goodness, see Liberty
This Plymouth rights! I see nothing then changed
Is sin de dance? Yes, my young friend, Lazy
Have the power to look beyond the money
And is more clever to practice? O Lucy
To pity the poor Mr Gilbert Tempe,
Should in business, our own to his point,
The Tower of Babel Liberty. As
You know his manner like. Oh, our ------ used
Of Fathers, but his slaves. While could lies, Idiot
Be given in over manage a across my idea.

Don C.

Well is more Intelligence see type!
Tony does well and open mind.

(to young)

C'est bien, n'est ce.

Hugh O.

(Aside) To Gilbert's owner.
(Talk Gilbert)
(Aloud) Well, Tony, money's going
Wed you.

(Gilbert turns back and walks)

Is ... Possibility that is why?
Subjected to a positively round
Always place, at claims of Journey? Mr
Be hard only cows what enough Lucy Lou.
(Exit Gilbert and Hugh)

Mr. G.

Another plaster to the cause that large
Mrs. As the sound of Dancing above.
Our unintercepting Jewels. The Superfluity
Is some via Aria Yes! Better seen by Tony Finis.

Don C.

I have Tried like come begin.

Mr. G.

Ten are a long delay to Lucy's possible alone.
And all to wear. Lay down for our ten.
Tel whether is to Lucy eliminating.
Then our ... Mr Gilbert's wedding are

Be worthy husbands to our faithful wives
The jewels God intended us to wear.

(Enter OTILLE and ANGELE. The doctors are applying fresh bandages to the wound.)

Otille.

My God! Let not this blood be spilled in vain--
Behold this reeking sacrifice, this torn
And gaping heart. Is there no eloquence
In the mute appeal of those ghastly lips?
What man can look upon this piteous sight
Unmoved? And would you bind your children down
Into this Hell to gratify your lust?
Ma foi! Are ye mere brutes or are ye men?
(Shuts out the cruel sight with her hands.

SCENE II. Same. (Enter DONNA OLIVIERA. Exit all but the necessary attendants.)

The Don should don the cap which fits so well.

Don O.

The Don dons not the cap that does not fit,
But I'll give you gratis some fitting hints,
Exposing private escapades betrays
A want of delicacy.

Otille.

Private sins
Breed public wrongs. Should not the people lift
Their earnest voices in a heart-felt plea
In behalf of their unborn progeny?
Mock modesty, mon pere. Ha! secrecy
Indeed--where can we hide our loathsome selves?
We poisoned tares your wanton hands have sowed
Among the wheat? The fruit betrays the germ,
We are the dusky mirrors de nos peres,
Mon grand seigneur, our presence speaks your shame,
You publish your affairs de coeur, then say
Fie! this exposure is indelicate. (Pointing to herself)
You send us forth, your yellow documents,
Your living chronicles of infamy
Into the world to blazon your disgrace,
And then demand of others secrecy.
Know then th' observant world will ever wag
Its thousand tongues on th' omnipresent--know--
While crime exists it will be worded--though
The reminiscence be unsavory.

The very existence of the Octoroone,
Our birth, our advent, is indelicate
And as accusing as was Banquo's wraith,
That stalked among his guests--the heedless ghost
Unmindful of the feelings of his host.
Every crime has its ghost and I am yours.

Don O.

But in the name of decency--let not
Man's private life be trumpeted abroad.

Otille.

So says the coward, the thief, the murderer,
But crime should be exposed--that other crimes
May be prevented-- other victims spared.
I would save others from my wretched fate,
Down with miscegenation--bastard vile--
Usurper bestial, that insults your pride,
Dethrones your honor and your chastity
And tramples your fair children underneath
Its tyrant heel. With fire and sword wage war
Against this cursed pestilential scourge.
Shall I be grateful to the viper who
Has stung me into life? (Handing her father a gleaming blade which she has snatched from the fold of her hair, where its curiously wrought hilt has served as an ornament.)
Take back your gift.

Don O.

(With bowed head)

I've lived too long--now breaks my heart.

(Donna O. approaches Otille, taking the jewelled poinard from her grasp and laying it aside)

Donna O.

You are
The bud love grafted on my barren life
Until it bloomed as on the pristine stock.
Hast thou forgot that older, golden time?

Otille.

Who are you lady bird? Your pretty face
Like some sweet, delicate, familiar scent
That takes me back to days of Auld Lang Syne

Recalls a tender dream of sweet wild flowers,
Of birds and brooks and happy childish hours.

Donna O.

This is enough to melt an iceberg. Dear,
I am your mother. Daughter, speak to me.

(Ghost rises, a creature of Otille's excited imagination.)

Otille.

No, there's my mother--soft--the Octoroone--
O, save me! save me! I am haunted! look!

(Ghost points to Don Oli.)

Ghost.

I came not here my child, to censure him
I'm but an Octoroone and he is white.
But is it naught that I have been betrayed?
That I have been deserted and despised?
O! is it naught that he should take my all
And give me nothing in return? May God
Forgive him. I cannot, I crave revenge
I've fed on vengeance, all these weary years.

Otille.

Poor ghost! and is that all you feed upon?
No wonder you're so thin and lantern-jawed--
Methinks it must have been some half-starved spook
Who smacked his lips and said: "Revenge is sweet".

Ghost.

Come hither daughter--come chérie--how I
Have longed to clasp thee in one fond embrace
To fold thee in these arms--these mother-arms,
'Twould bring back life and substance to this shade.
Though not unlike the Don's almightiness,
You are the repetition of my youth.

Otille.

And will I look like you when I am old
And creep through chinks and crannies too alack?
A God-forsaken, wind-begotten wreith?
Will I, like you, when no one wants me back,
Come stealing through some evil-omened crack?

Angèle.

Dere ain't no ghost in here--you're crezzy chile
If you begins a talkin to yerself,
Dey'll take you fur a shure nuff nigger, Sah.

(Ghost points again to Don Oliviera.)

Ghost.

With sugared promises he won my babe
From me, and left me naught save memories fond;
Those empty husks of vanished joys. He stole
The luscious fruit, and gave the rind to me.
He took her from me as a careless child
Strips leaf by leaf a clinging blossom from
The parent stem. 'Tis but a broken flower;
L'enfant s'amuse. 'Tis but a shattered heart;
L'homme s'amuse. Ah! well! he is white and I
Am but an Octoroone, unlearned, despised.
O had my cruel wrongs, his silvery tongue,
His honeyed words, his blade of keen-edged wit,
They'd pierce your hearts, were they of adamant.
In mockery the wine of love he held
Unto my thirsting lips, and scarce across
My seething veins unto my eager heart
Was cabled its electric fire, when quick
He snatched from me the potent draught and passed
It to another? Ah, me! What of that?
I'm but an Octoroone, and he is white.
Miscegenation is as black as Hell.
Jehovah hurls the thunderbolts of Heaven
Against the perpetrators of this crime.
I trembled at the judgment seat. Then God
Said unto me: Poor Octoroone--thy sin
Is great--yet irresponsible art thou,
Untutored child of shame--but woe to him
Who stranded thee upon the rocks of wild
Despair and turned his prow to smiling shores.

Otille.

O! father, hear that execrable ghost
The Octoroone, she says I am her child.

Don O.

(Aside) Her words are dagger-thrusts that pierce my heart.

Otille.

Her ghostship is the mirror of myself
Who am to her, as bud to full-blown flower.

Angèle.

Chile--dey ain't nuthin dere what mortal eyes
Kin see, cept what you conjure up yerself,
De 'magination ob your fancy works
On you, ontil your lung ways will git
Us all in de lunattic 'sylum shure.

Otille.

(To Ghost) Your cunning fabrications are as void
Of substance as yourself. Avaunt! Avaunt!
Your evidence is as intangible
As is your ghostship's personality.
(Exit ghost)

Donna O.

Angele, you've known our darling since her birth
And you alone can solve this mystery.
Is Natalie the mother of Otille?

Angèle.

No--no--ole Miss, she's pure calcasian blood.
She flavor Natalie--but 'pearances
Am deceitful. (Aside) Bh if she was her Ma
I ain't gwine back on de pore child nohow,
Not for nobody, Sah, no ghost, no speerit,
No machinations ob de debil, Sah--(aloud)
You can't trust niggers--dey ain't got no word--
You can't put stock in colored folks nor ghosts--
Dey's too puffeckly onreliable,
And dat ghost ain't got a ghost ob a show.
It's all Luella's doins. She jes wants
To turn de pore gal's head, so she kin git
De money from her. It's a put up job.
It's jes a ghost story, trumped up agin
Young Miss--ain't she done had 'nuff mis'ry yet?
(Bending over Otille and caressing her)
Now honey, don't let nuthin worry you
Dere ain't no difference 'twixt de races, chile,
De fust batch turn out white, and den de mould
Got kind o'rusty. Spose ole marster had
Some pore white trash around dempre ises,
What couldn't keep his kitchen straight? Dat's all
You's pure Calcassian blood and no mistake,
I knowed you honey--before you was born.
(Enter DR. G.

SCENE III. Same. (Students enter preparatory to lecture hour. Alcide looks tenderly into Otille's face and listens helplessly to

her piteous ravings while she bends lovingly over him and sings)

Otille.

(Sings) Through thy glance the sunbeams shine
On this shadowed heart of mine.
For the love-light never dies
In my darling's dusky eyes. (Speaks caressingly)
How beautiful he is--how soft the curl
That twines around my finger--but hush--see
How warily it glides--it is that dark
And sluggish, sinuous stream that snake-like nests
Within my bosom, strangling every joy--
The cobra's deadly fangs have scarred my breast
And now, mon Dieu, they rend my husband's heart.
See how it coils its dusky length about
My darling. Serpent! poison me--don't touch
Him. He is dying and I cannot save
Him. Husband--dear husband--you would not die
And leave your pauvre petite, would you cherie?
He's dead--my husband's dead--dead--Heaven is dead--
His soul is crying out--I hear it speak--
The words are flowing from his heart's red lips
In drops of gore. On dit; the blood of Christ
Shall cleanse all sin. O could my husband's blood
And mine, but wipe out from this glorious land
Miscegenation's foul and loathsome brand.

Dr. G.

How through the tangled meshes of her brain
She interweaves the golden thread of thought.

Alcide.

(Aside) Doctor, can you restore my wife to health?

Dr. G.

Be calm, my friend. Death laughs at human skill.

Otille.

A man may have a penchant for a fair
Quadroone, but no sane man can possibly
Desire a taint in his posterity. (She grows faint)

Dr. G.

She is delirious. (Placing her on a lounge.)

Don O.

Listen! how she raves!

(Alcide buries his face in his hands and utters a low, hoarse moan)

Alcide.

(Aside) With what a bitter, double meaning now,
Those words come home to me. Those cruel words
I uttered thoughtlessly so long ago.
Poor child--they're burned into her very brain.

(Otille rises with that suddenly acquired vigor which sometimes precedes death, totters to Alcide, stretches forth her arms towards some unseen vision and softly sings)

The Circean Cup.

Though sylvan joys delight the heart
Of Heaven they're but a meagre part,
Not flowers can give celestial bliss
Though blushing with the sunbeam's kiss,

Nor bird, nor brook with music's voice
Can make the troubled heart rejoice,
But come--grief's heavy heart we'll sink
In Love's intoxicating drink.

I quaffed the Circean bowl with thee
And that was Heaven enough for me,
Yet Love, I taste the dregs of pain
In every cup of joy I drain.

(Kneeling to Alcide)

Dost love me husband? Dost love thy petite?
Thy poor quadroone? My light, my life, my Heaven
My God. My mother taught me how to pray
But her kind Deity has forsaken me.
And now, Alcide, I know no God but thee.

Alcide.

The waxen petals of the sweet wild rose
That wanton winds with fingers rude, have torn
From sheltering bush, are not more helpless, love
Than thou. O! would that I could die for thee.

(She weeps)

Otille.

I'm dying, sweetheart--kiss me ere I die.
Clasp me close to your heart chère. Swear that you
Will lever leave Otille.

Alcide.

I swear.

Otille.

Now take
My hand and go with me to Heaven.

(He takes her hand)

Alcide.

Aye, sweet!
For where thou art is paradise to me.
Hell will be Heaven, Otille, if thou art there.

(Otille dies. Excitement and disorder. Alcide lifts his head and looks towards his wife.)

My wife, thy suffering mind has reached beyond
The circumscribed vision of grovelling man,
Unto Jehovah's equitable throne,
Where none are whiter-souled than thou--Mine own.

(Quick as thought, he snatches the surgeon's knife and stabs himself to death. Doctors and students all rush to the suicide; all is confusion.)

C U R T A I N.

OTILLE THE OCTOROONE.

P L O T.

Oliviera, a wealthy Spanish Don of Acadie, a planter and a bachelor left his magnificent estate to go in search of slaves. At the auction rooms of the Arcade Exchange, New Orleans, he bought Angèle, a negro wench, and Natalie, a sloe-eyed Octoroone. He bid high for the dreamy Octoroone and carried her off in triumph to his beautiful home and made her his mistress.

Skillful masters were employed to cultivate the gifts which nature had, with lavish hand, bestowed on her. On wings of love the years flew swiftly by.

Long after war had laid his battle-axe aside, the languorous Octoroone gave birth to a lovely girl baby for whose sweet sake the Don crowned the mother's brow with orange blooms.

Soon legal ties grew irksome, and with false premises he bribed his wife to yield their babe, Otille, to him. Then he, through stratagy, destroyed the record of his marriage, abandoned his spouse and went to Paris with the child.

The deserted wife soon died of a broken heart. Ere many summers waxed and waned the Don chose a lovely and aristocratic bride, whose lofty station was in keeping

with his noble lineage. No children were born of this second marriage, but the fond step-mother's heart-strings wound themselves closer and closer each successive year, about her husband's beautiful and gifted daughter, Otille. The Don and Angèle, the faithful negro nurse of Otille, guarded so well the secret of her birth, that neither she nor her step-mother suspected the fatal taint.

The lovely girl blossomed into a queenly woman. Her marvelous beauty made her conspicuous wherever she went.

The war had wrought great changes in the South. The Don had lost his slaves and his property had decreased in value. To rebuild his fallen fortunes, he appealed to his daughter, who, to appease his cupidity, offered herself up as a scarifice on the hymeneal altar.

She wed the parrenu and ex-overseer Weyburn, who loved her at first in his coarse fashion.

On returning from Europe, the Weyburns, the younger members of Oliviera's family, become the guests of Alcide de Viavant, a wealthy young Creole lawyer, whose father is an intimate friend of the Spanish Don. The old plantation, the ancestral home of the De Viavants, was in the environs of New Orleans on the banks of the Mississippi,

where the Marine Hospital now stands. The De Viavants, illustrious Creoles, descended from the Marquis de Viavant of the old French régime, were residing in Europe for the nonce; leaving Alcide, the eldest son, to manage affairs at home. Weary of keeping bachelor's hall, the young lawyer induces Oliveira, his father's friend, to persuade the newly-wedded couple to enliven with their presence, at least for a time, his beautiful and spacious suburban retreat.

Otille, the fascinating young wife of Weyburn, has a tiny dark vein on the lower part of her left cheek, which the wary Luella, her jealous and intriguing rival, the former mistress of Weyburn and mother of his child, declares to be a mark of negro blood. Weyburn becomes the victim of Luella's wiles, and taunts the unconscious and outraged Otille, until she becomes almost frantic. In the meantime Alcide becomes infatuated with Otille who, though pure, returns his affection. The chivalrous Alcide determines to leave her, but dallies until his plans are frustrated. Angélique (Angèle) Otille's black nurse and life-long attendant, who was born here on the De Viavant plantation and had drifted back as it were to her old home, perfectly understood the situation. She tries faithfully with her voodoo remedies to alleviate

[illegible] the Medical Hospital [illegible] [illegible]. The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

the sufferings and nervous prostration of her mistress, but makes an almost fatal mistake in the herbs, which changes completely the order of events. The medicine throws Otille into a trance, which simulates death.

Angèle (Angélique), in terror for her mistress and yet afraid to own her error, allows Otille to be buried, but immediately after the funeral, rushes off to Alcide and confesses everything, imploring him to save her mistress. He does not need her entreaties, but enjoins her to meet him at a certain time and place when, with the assistance of his intimate friend Dr. Gregorio, of the Charity Hospital, and a professional Grab, they effect her resurrection. Matters become more complicated. Otille through the drug which Angèle has administered, has lost all knowledge of the past. She clings helplessly to Angèle and Alcide; and her peculiarly unfortunate position appeals strongly to their affection for her. Angèle knowing the suspicion which blasts Otille in Weyburn's house, keeps her own counsel, but refuses to let her mistress return there. Without giving particulars, Angèle merely states to Alcide that Weyburn is cruel to his wife, and declares "Young Miss shan't go back to Massa Weyburn, I'll hide her in my little shantee fust and work for her myself. Dere's plenty food and close

for my lill gal in dese ole arms." Alcide seeing no other way out of this dilemma and feeling responsible in a measure for Otille's second birth, as it were, decides to take her abroad and place her in a convent, delighted to be of service, even in so small a way, to the beautiful and innocent waif that Fate's cruel arms have tossed, as if in mockery, across his path. Some months after the apparent death of Otille, Luella prevails on Weyburn to marry her privately that their son may become legitimate.

Soon becoming weary of the ties that bind him to the intriguing Luella, he decamps with Inez, the dashing wife of an Italian fruit vendor. In the meantime, a man who resembled Weyburn, was the victim of a railroad accident and Weyburn was reported dead, which news reached Otille at the convent. Weyburn, in his wanderings with his paramour, had heard rumors of his wife's resurrection, also her betrothal to Alcide De Viavant, and their return to New Orleans, and he determined on revenge. One night he tracked the affianced lovers to a New Orleans theatre, and with Inez, lay in wait for their return. Startled at sight of his wife, as at an apparition, yet not awaiting an explanation, he shoots at Alcide but misses him. Inez, jealous of the elegant

for my life and to carry out some." Aside making no other mention of such duties and treating responsibility to a memorial for Hillyer's natural father, as it were, he-
elsewhere he talks that element and pledge him to a contract, negotiated by his of authority, even in an small a way, to the Hamilton's son (assuming that Hill's actual name before finding, as if to reassure, promise his gift. Some mention either the government debts of Hillyer, Jacob pre-
vailed on Tagliaferro to marry Jane Hamilton but that was not yet become legitimate.

Such testamentary events of the time that Hill had him to the intriguing Jacobs, by marriage with Jane, the daughter also of an Italian family physician. In Tagliaferro's
than the professional Tagliaferro, was the origin of a national reputation and enjoying the reputation that, which does indeed-
ed Hillyer at the moment. Tagliaferro, in his relationship with his grandchild, had taken charge of his wife's de-
scendants, also her brothers to Alpine to Tiverton, and their return to the Chateau, was no sentimental or romantic. One object in transferred the affiliated Jacobs to a for Tagliaferro Chateau, and with Jane, her in their fam-
ily's return. Hamilton at night of his wife, as a an alienation, yet not avoiding an negotiation, he assure-
ed Alpine but remove him. Then, jealous of the children

woman whom Weyburn says is his wife or her spirit, snatches his revolver from him, takes aim at her rival and wounds her slightly. The guilty pair make good their escape. Alcide leaves Madame Weyburn at her door in the care of her faithful nurse, Angèle. Outraged and indignant, he follows the trial of the would be murderer, and when about to overtake him Weyburn becomes the victim of Inez's husband, Jésu Christi Montibello who is a member of the Mafia. Inez betrays her husband, and dies at the hands of the Mafia. After weary waiting and much tribulation, the nuptials of the devoted lovers Otille and Alcide, are solemnized. Then follow a few short months of happy wedded life at the old plantation house, when one fateful hour the cup of joy is dashed from them. Angèle's careless boy, Snowdrift, accidentally sets a part of the plantation house, near Otille's room, on fire. Otille, being in a delicate condition at the time, narrowly escapes with her life. She is carried to the guest room, which she had occupied so long ago with Weyburn, her first husband, when they were visitors at the De Viavant plantation. She awakes to consciousness amid the old surroundings and memories long buried revive. The shock breaks the spell which had enchained her, and slowly lifts the veil from the past. She hears the same old clock

again. The night Jasmine is still blooming near the window, and its subtle perfume seems to waft her back again across the vasty sea of vanished years to the sickening memories of auld lang syne. Again the old doubts returned, the old thought haunted her, "was she an Octoroone?" She would tell her husband all she knew, if it made him hate her. This horrible doubt was almost as bad as certainty. She would poison herself, and not be a clog upon Alcide, her noble husband, if he were her husband.

Maybe it was all a dream. Perhaps Weyburn is still her husband. She will see. She strikes a match and holds it over her husband's head. On seeing Alcide she kneels in ecstacy, though silently, lest she disturb the slumbers of her husband-lover, and lifts her heart in gratitude to God. At this critical period she receives a visit from Duella, in which the latter professes to consider herself the rightful heir to Weyburn's property, though powerless to substantiate it by a legal claim. She denounces Otille as an Octoroone, and threatens exposure, subtly hinting at Weyburn's estate, as hush-money for herself and her son.

Overcome by distracting complications and trials, Otille succumbs to the terrible stress upon her sensitive mind and delicate organization.

Determined that no child of hers shall suffer what she has borne, she drinks a poisonous draught. Not having taken sufficient to produce immediate death, she sleeps, but revives. After an exciting conversation with her husband, she swoons. He sees the empty vial with the death-head on it, thinks her dead and shoots himself. By order of his physician, Dr. Gregorio of the Charity Hospital, De Viavant is removed to that institution. Otille, whose mind has become entirely unbalanced, arrays herself in her bridal robes and on learning of her husband's whereabouts, refuses Angele's entreaties to don a more suitable attire, orders her carriage and repairs to the Hospital.

Rejecting all overtures to leave him, she remains at his side, where she dies from the effects of the poison. Alcide is recovering through the skill of his physician, but on witnessing the death of his beautiful and idolized wife, he snatches the surgeon's operating knife from the table and stabs himself to death.

S Y N O P S I S.

A C T I.

New Orleans.

The De Viavant Plantation where the Marine Hospital now stands.

The De Viavants, creoles of high descent, having gone to Europe on a prolonged pleasure jaunt, have left Alcide, the elder son, a young lawyer in charge of their ancestral home on the banks of the Mississippi. Don Oliviera, a Spanish noble, a planter and friend of the De Viavants, has just returned from a visit to the continent with his wife and Otille, his beautiful daughter by a former marriage who is newly wedded to Weyburn, a Parvenu. Alcide, weary of keeping bachelor's hall, has induced the Weyburns to become his guests and enliven at least for a time the loneliness of his spacious suburban retreat.

Weyburn falls a victim to the wiles of Luella his former mistress. The secret of the Don unearthed by his daughter's jealous rival. The fatal taint.

Alcide becomes infatuated with Weyburn's wife, the beautiful Otille. Determines to leave her. Procrastinates. Misses the boat. His plans are frustrated. Weyburn's brutality. Otille's despair. The old clock.

Alcide's secret and unpropitious return. Angèle's sympathy being enlisted in behalf of her mistress, she resorts to voodooism. She brews a potion but makes a mistake in the herbs.

A midnight orgie. Alcide's curiosity aroused. A like-like, life-sized marble statue of Alcide. The herbs do their diabolical work. Otille falls into a deathlike trance.

A C T II.

Alcide's Bedroom. Death Chamber. Metairie Ridge Graveyard.

Resurrection.

Otille convalescent. The drug Angèle administered by mistake continues its baleful work. Through it the past becomes a blank to Otille. She is born again, as it were with no remembrance of the life before. Otille, helpless as a new-born babe, clings to Alcide, her devoted but Platonic lover and her nurse Angèle. The doctor proposes to send her back to her husband. Angèle stoutly refuses this proposition. Knowing the cruelty of Weyburn and the dark cloud which hangs over her mistress, Angèle keeps her own counsel merely saying: "Young Miss shan't go back; I'll take her to my little shanty first." Alcide decides to take Otille abroad and place her in a convent, where the report of Weynurn's death reaches her.

A C T III.

Otille, now Widow Weyburn, has left the convent. She becomes the fiancée of Alcide De Viavant. The lovers. Weyburn's death a false report. Weyburn and Inez, his paramour. A recontre. Pistol shots. Otille slightly wounded.

Same. New Orleans. Louisiana Marsh. Back o' Town. The Mafia.

A C T IV.

The De Viavant Plantation. Scene same as Act I.

Scene I.

Otille, Alcide's wife of a year.

Snowdrift, Angele's careless boy has accidentally set fire to that part of the plantation house near the room of Otille, who being in a delicate condition barely escapes with her life. She is carried insensible from her room to the guest chamber and awakes to conciousness in the same room where she and Weyburn her first husband had been guests so long ago. The shock and the old scenes break the spell, which had so long enchained her. The old haunting memories return. The old clock, the subtle perfume of the night Jasmine help to revive the miserable past. She strikes a match and holding it above her husband's head says softly: I'll solve this riddle, come what may." On seeing Alcide, her devoted husband, she kneels in gratitude to God. At this critical period, she receives a visit from the intriguing Luella, which completely prostrates her.

Otille succumbs to the terrible strain upon her nervous system. She determines that no child of hers shall inherit the fatal taint. Her mind becomes unbalanced. She takes a slow, but subtle, deadly poison.

A D E L E.

The In Memory Elizabeth. Scene Seven Act I.

Scene I.

Utilia, Alvarez's wife of a year.

Suddenly, Amelia's question was then automatically cut dim on that night of the disaster which near the model of utilia, who stood in a dazzling production dress to escape with her life. She is seated immediately from her frame in the least elegant and looking in astonishment in the most dame-like way and wearing her first ball-room gown that ever graced so long ago. The week and the old weeks (with the girls, there had so long elapsed ...). The old Spanish dancing master. The old clock, the middle partner of the grand country dance to receive the statement year. The burgess a better and ability is above her husband's home more worlds: "It's none this night, more than ever." On finding Alvarez, her usual husband, she remains a statuesque in the. At this critical period, she receives a visit from the inferior family, whom unexpected pressures her.

Utilia responds to the invocation already upon her memory system. The recollections her on which of have which informed the final lady. Her mind assumes un-ladyness. She feels a blow, not mortal, deadly poison.

Alcide overwhelmed with grief shoots himself. Dr. Gregorio, his friend, orders his removal to the Charity Hospital.

A C T V. Mad Scene.

Lecture hour. Ampitheatre of the Charity Hospital Students, Doctors, etc.

Otille arrayed in her bridal robes, refuses to change her dress, but commands Angèle to order the carriage and accompany her to the Charity Hospital.

Shadow Song. Weeps over her husband's fate.

Students and doctors have retired, only necessary attendants remaining with patient. Otille hurls her anathemas against her father. Her mind still affected. The Ghost. Otille's faithful nurse Angèle false to facts, but true to her mistress.

Enter Doctors and Students preparatory to Lecture Hour.

Otille refuses to leave Alcide. Song. The Circean Cup. The poison takes effect and Otille dies beside her husband. De Viavant, who is recovering through the skill of his physician, on witnessing the death of his idolized wife, snatches the operating knife from the table and stabs himself to death.